

VERTIGO

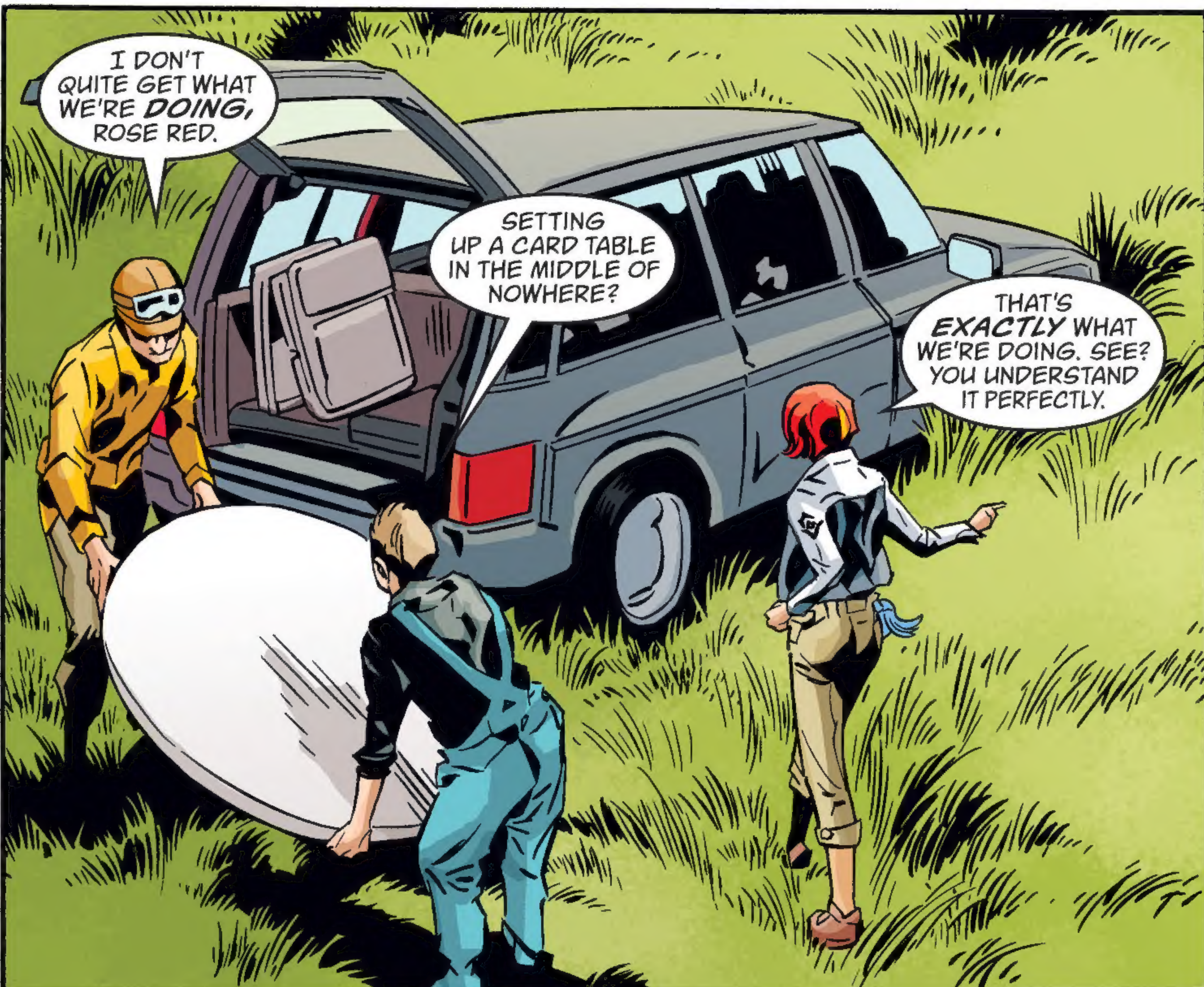
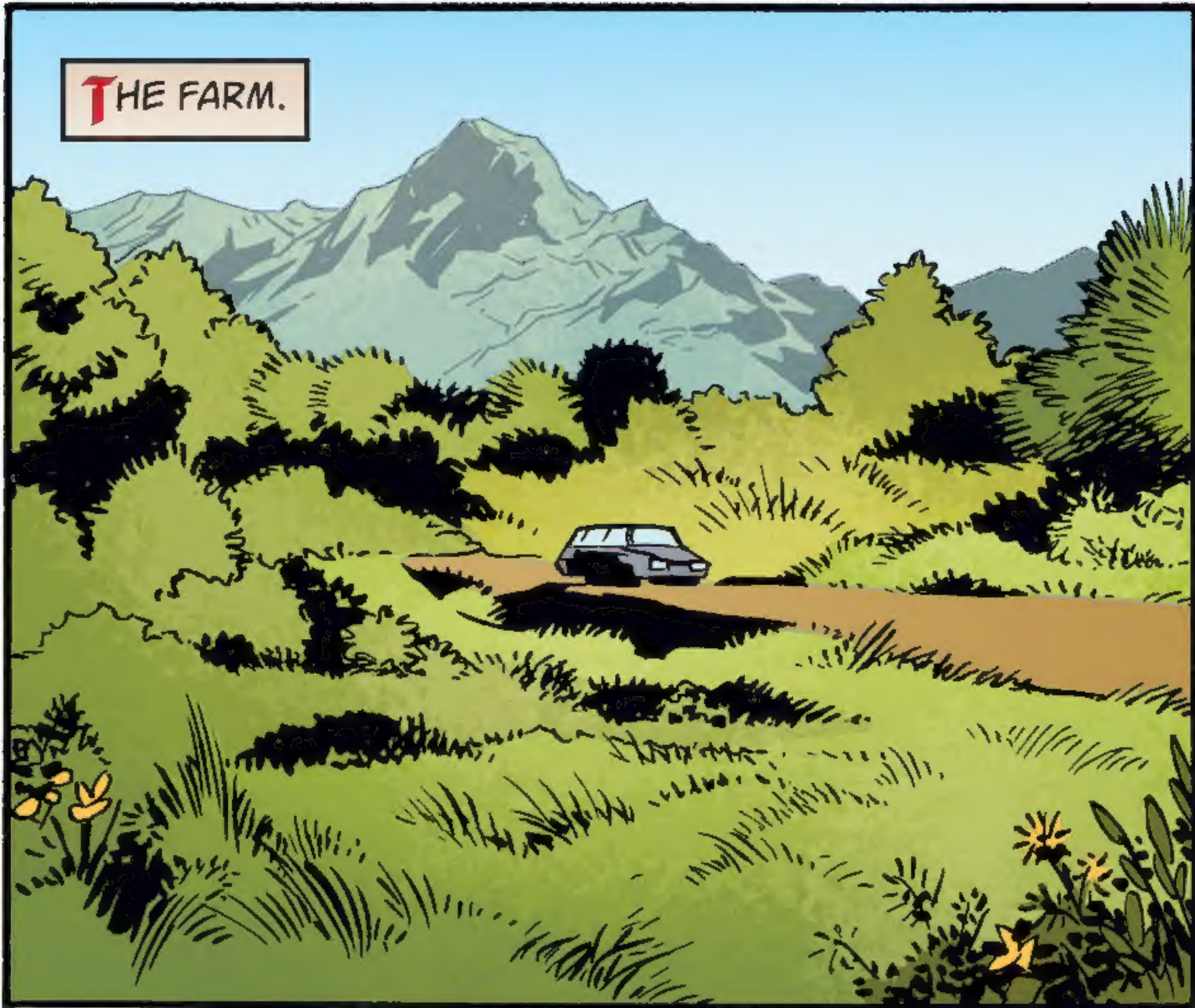
WILLINGHAM • BUCKINGHAM • LEIALOHA

F A B L E S



132 Oct '13
suggested for
mature readers
vertigocomics.com

THE FARM.



I DON'T QUITE GET WHAT WE'RE DOING, ROSE RED.

SETTING UP A CARD TABLE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE?

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE DOING. SEE? YOU UNDERSTAND IT PERFECTLY.

Bird Calls

Part Two of

Camelot



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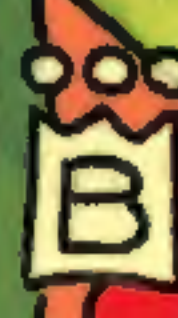
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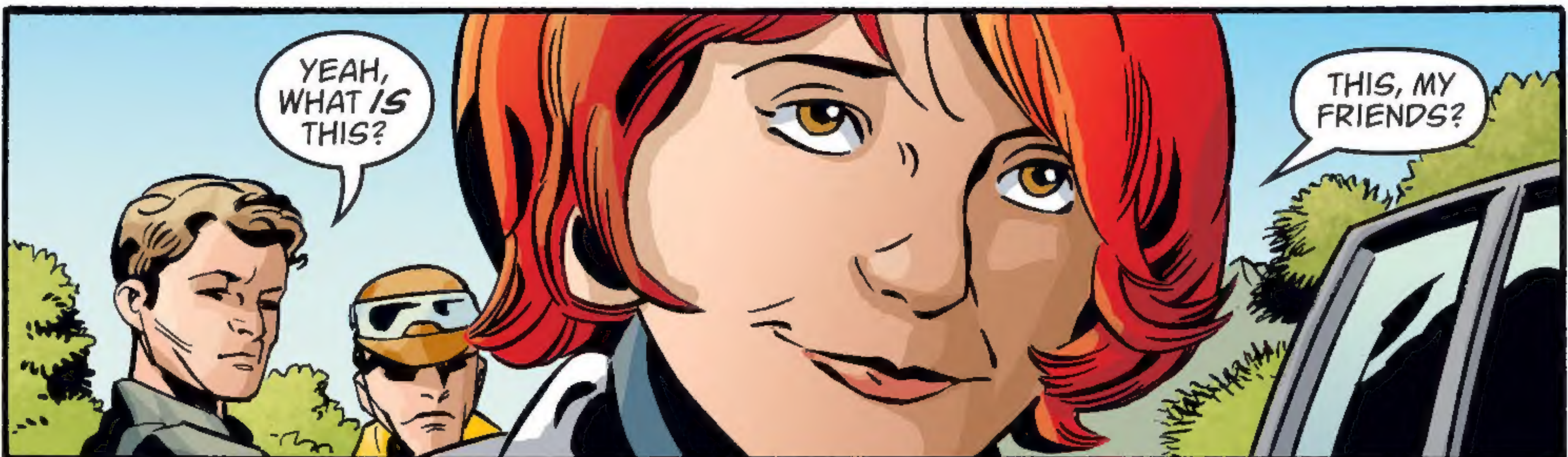
UH, OKAY.

SO...



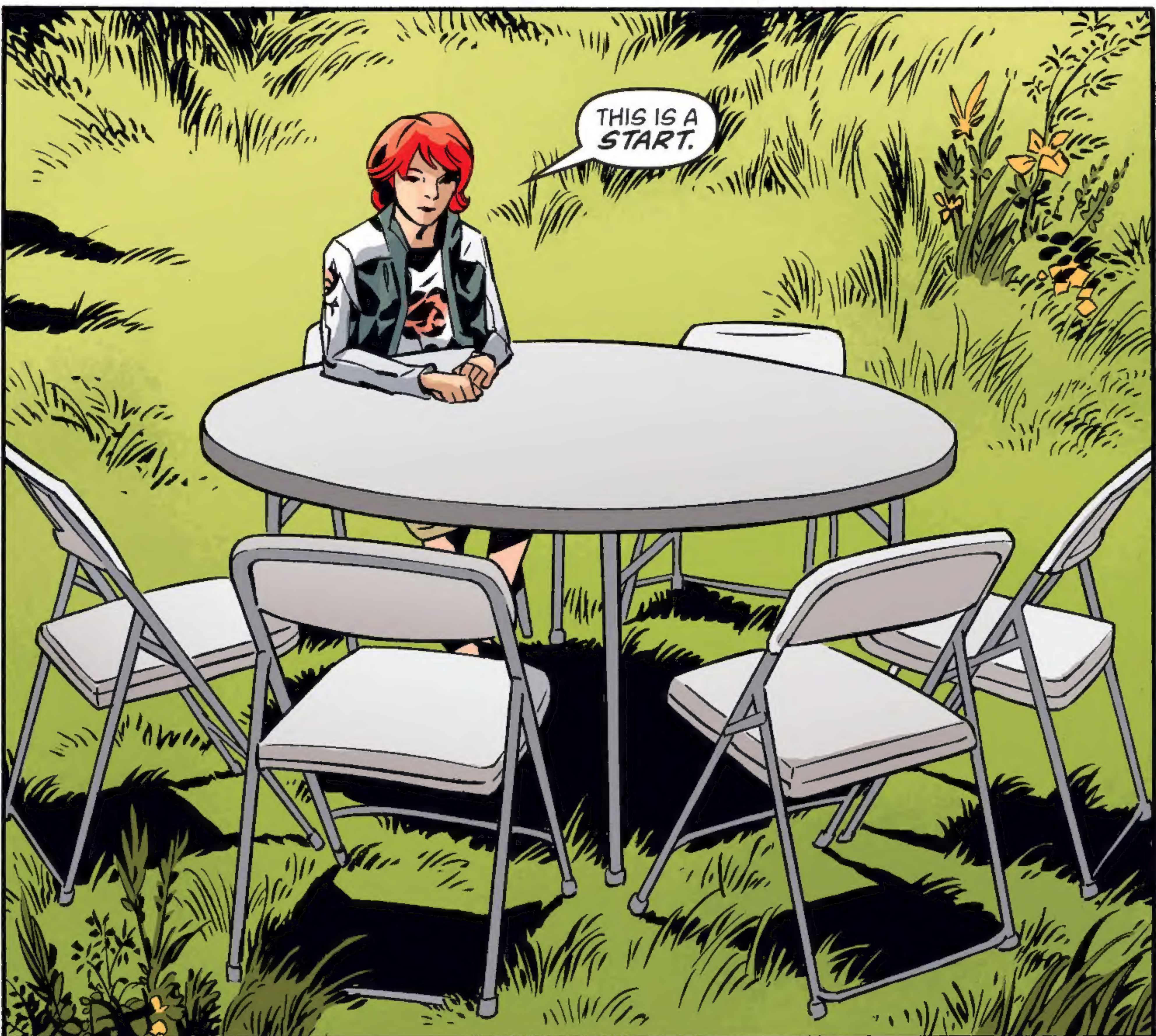
...NOT TO PRY INTO THE BIZARRE PRIVATE BUSINESS OF AUGUST PERSONAGES, BUT... UH...

...WHAT'S THE DEAL?



YEAH, WHAT IS THIS?

THIS, MY FRIENDS?



THIS IS A START.

MEANWHILE...

HERE THEY COME.

STAND BACK. GIVE THEM PLENTY OF ROOM. REMEMBER, WE HAVE TO TREAT HER LIKE A VISITING AMBASSADOR.

KING AMBROSE.

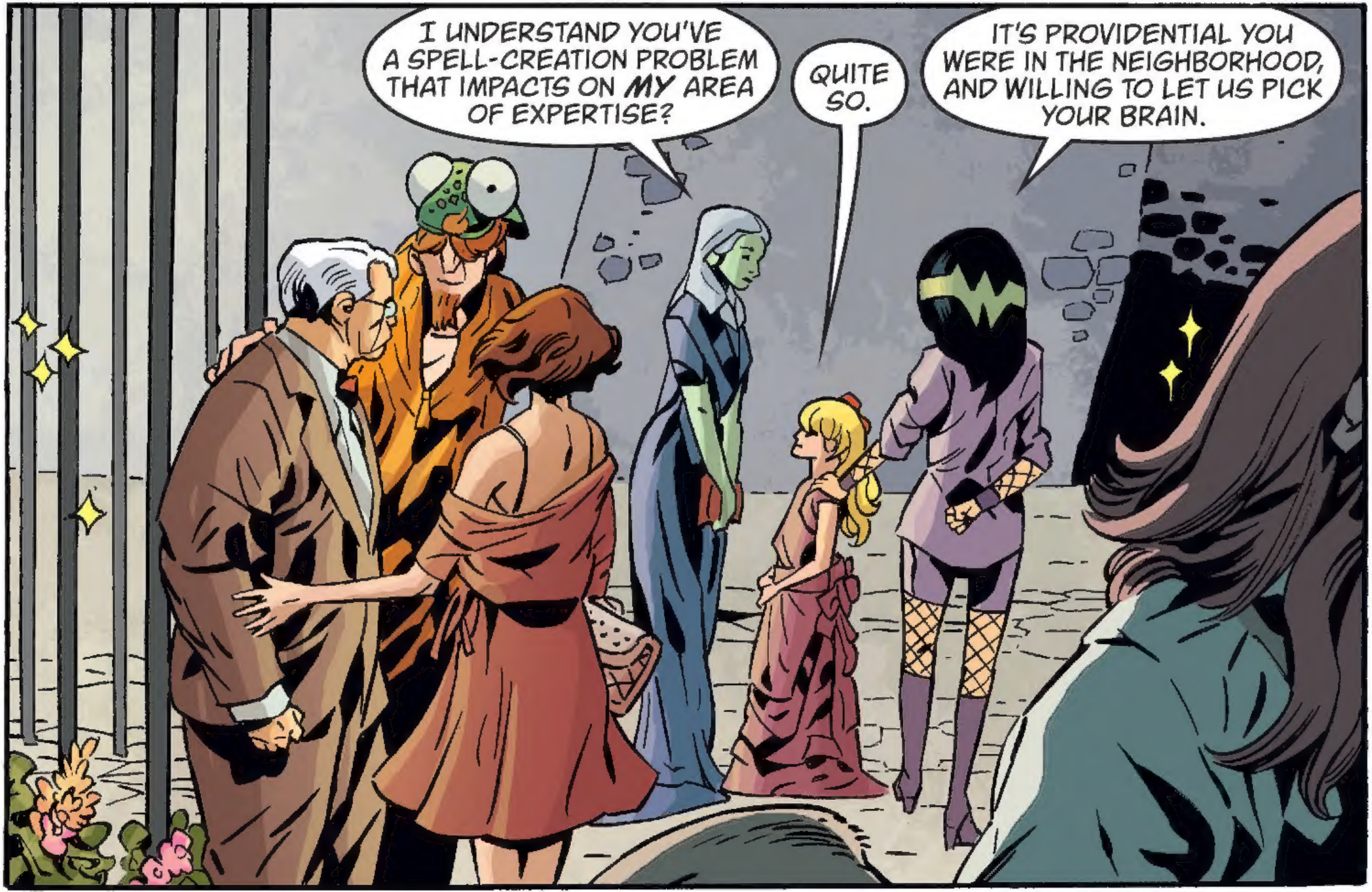
WELCOME BACK TO FABLETOWN RESTORED!

AND YOU MUST BE LADY LAKE.

OH, DON'T SAY IT THAT WAY. IT SOUNDS SILLY. LAKE ALONE IS FINE.

LIKE MOST OF US, I'VE HAD MANY NAMES AND TITLES OVER THE YEARS, BUT THE SINGLE NAME LAKE, SANS HONORIFICS, IS ALL I'M USING THESE DAYS.





I UNDERSTAND YOU'VE A SPELL-CREATION PROBLEM THAT IMPACTS ON MY AREA OF EXPERTISE?

QUITE SO.

IT'S PROVIDENTIAL YOU WERE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AND WILLING TO LET US PICK YOUR BRAIN.



DELIGHTED TO HELP, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT GAVE ME AN EXCUSE TO TAKE A BREAK FROM TRULY DREARY WEDDING NEGOTIATIONS AND FINALLY SEE THE FAMOUS FABLETOWN.

I DO HOPE WE'LL ALSO HAVE TIME TO SEE A BIT OF THE MUNDY WHILE WE'RE HERE.



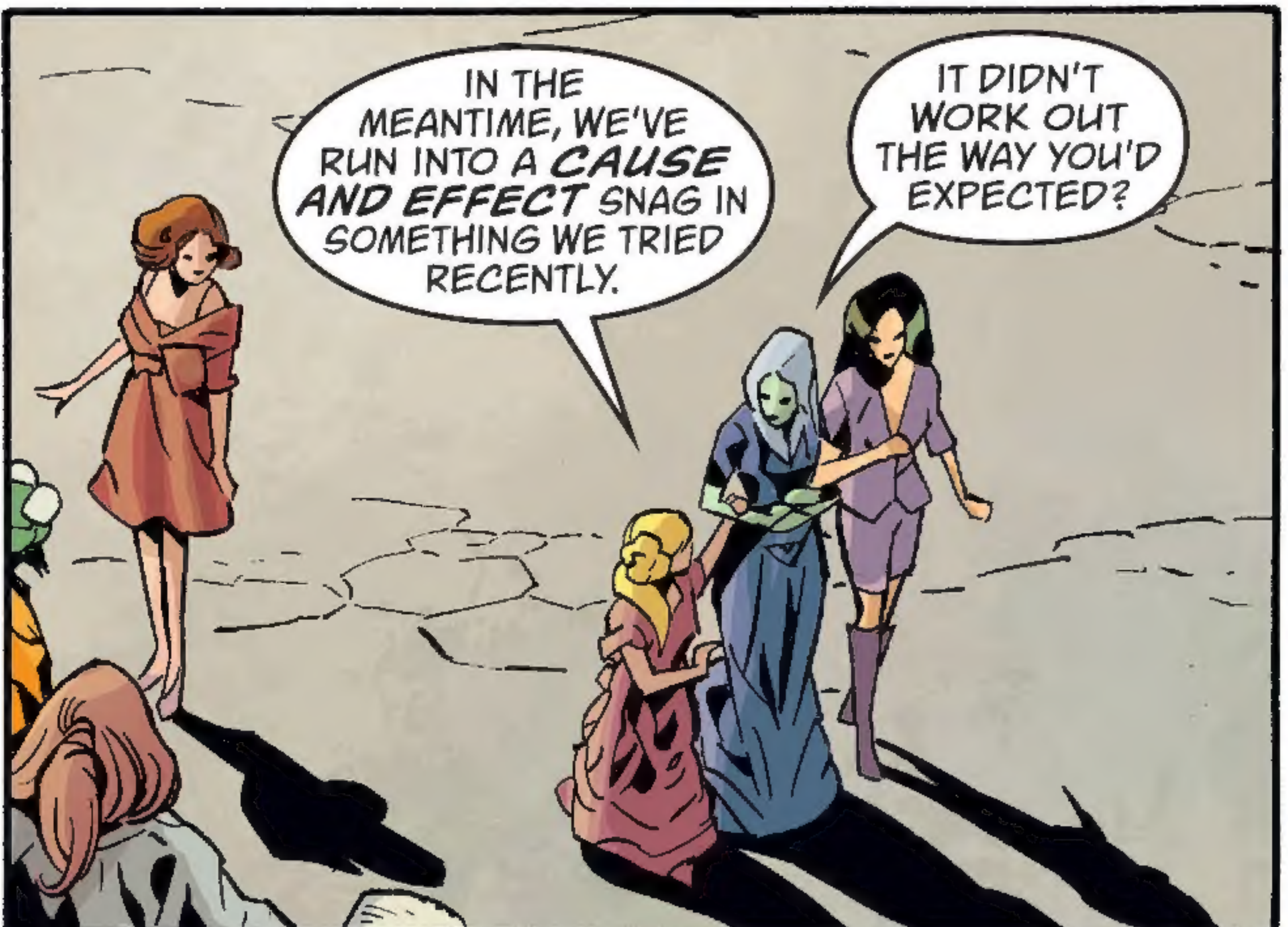
COUNT ON IT.

THE ONLY REASON I CAME ALONG WAS TO WANDER DEEP INTO THE MUNDY FOR A TRULY PROMISCUOUS BOUT OF SHOPPING.



I'D BE THRILLED TO SHOW YOU SOME OF THE CITY.

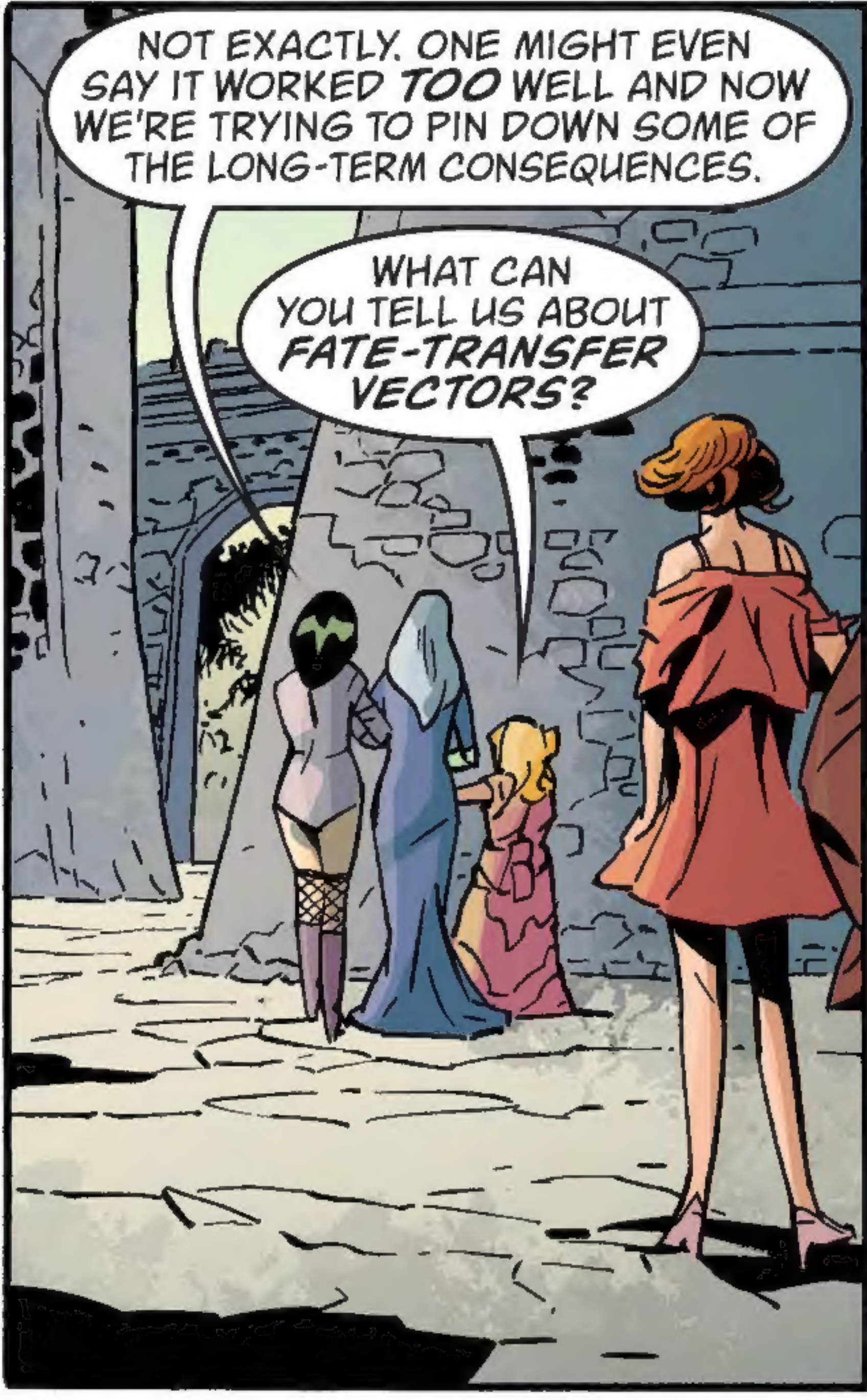
THAT WOULD BE SPLENDID.



IN THE MEANTIME, WE'VE RUN INTO A CAUSE AND EFFECT SNAG IN SOMETHING WE TRIED RECENTLY.

IT DIDN'T WORK OUT THE WAY YOU'D EXPECTED?





NOT EXACTLY. ONE MIGHT EVEN SAY IT WORKED *TOO* WELL AND NOW WE'RE TRYING TO PIN DOWN SOME OF THE LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT *FATE-TRANSFER VECTORS*?



DAMN BUT IT'S *GOOD* TO HAVE YOU BACK, FLY.

HOW LONG CAN YOU STAY?

I'M NOT SURE.



ROSE RED WANTS TO CONSULT WITH *WEYLAND* ON SOME NEW BUILDING PROJECTS UP AT THE FARM. I NEED TO TAG ALONG.

OUTSIDE OF HAVEN, *WEYLAND* WOULD *FADE*, WITHOUT ME ALONG TO KEEP HIM SOLID AND INTACT.



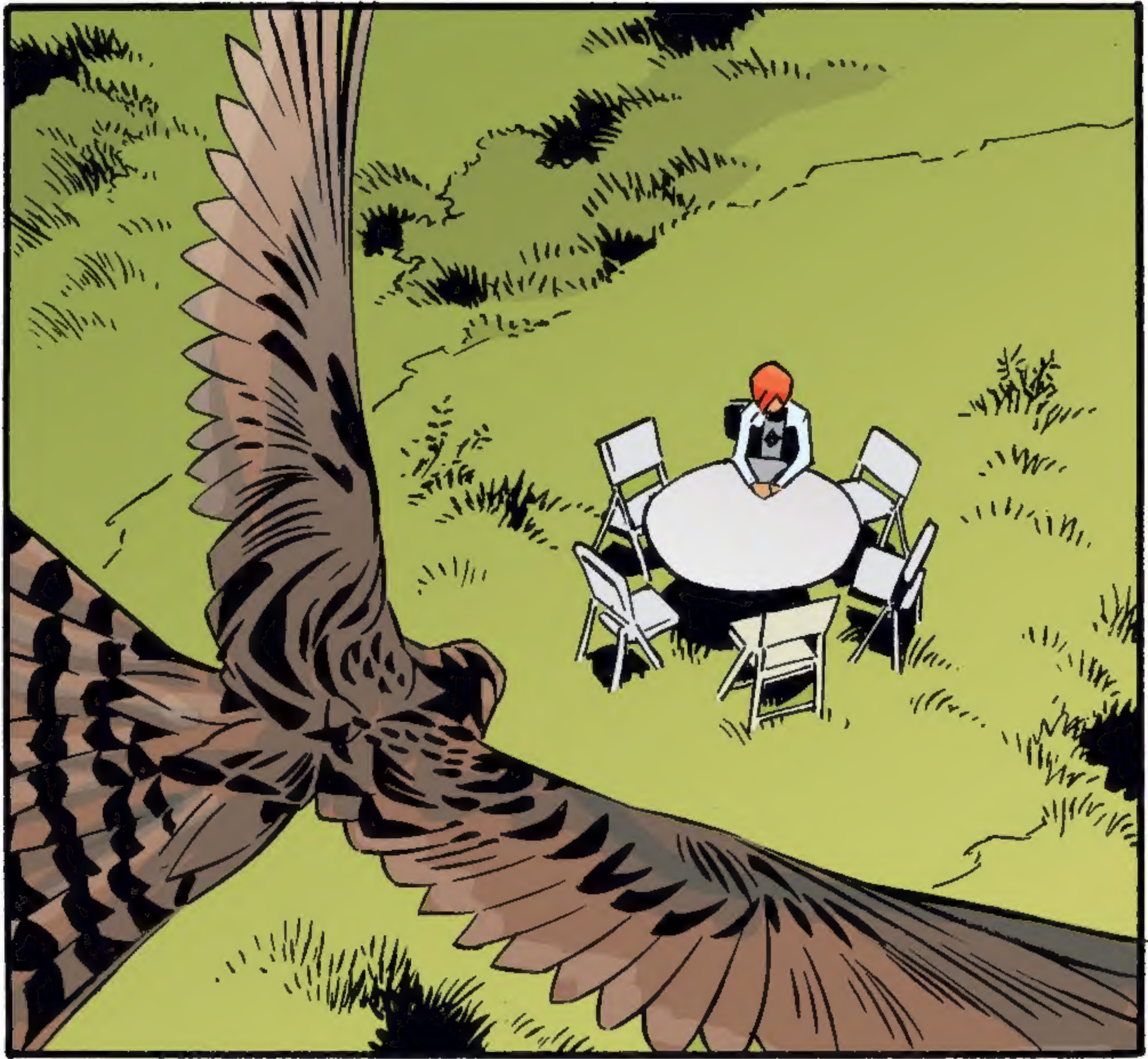
NEW PROJECT?

I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT NEW BUILDINGS.



THIS IS *BIGBY*? TERRIBLE.

TO BE SURE. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITHOUT OUR LAST, BEST MONSTER?



ROSE RED.

COMMANDER ARROW.

YOU WANTED TO SPEAK TO ME?

I DID. I'D LIKE YOU TO GATHER THE LEADERS OF THE AIR PATROL, ALONG WITH THE OTHER BIRD FABLES WHO'VE RANGED BEYOND THIS WORLD.

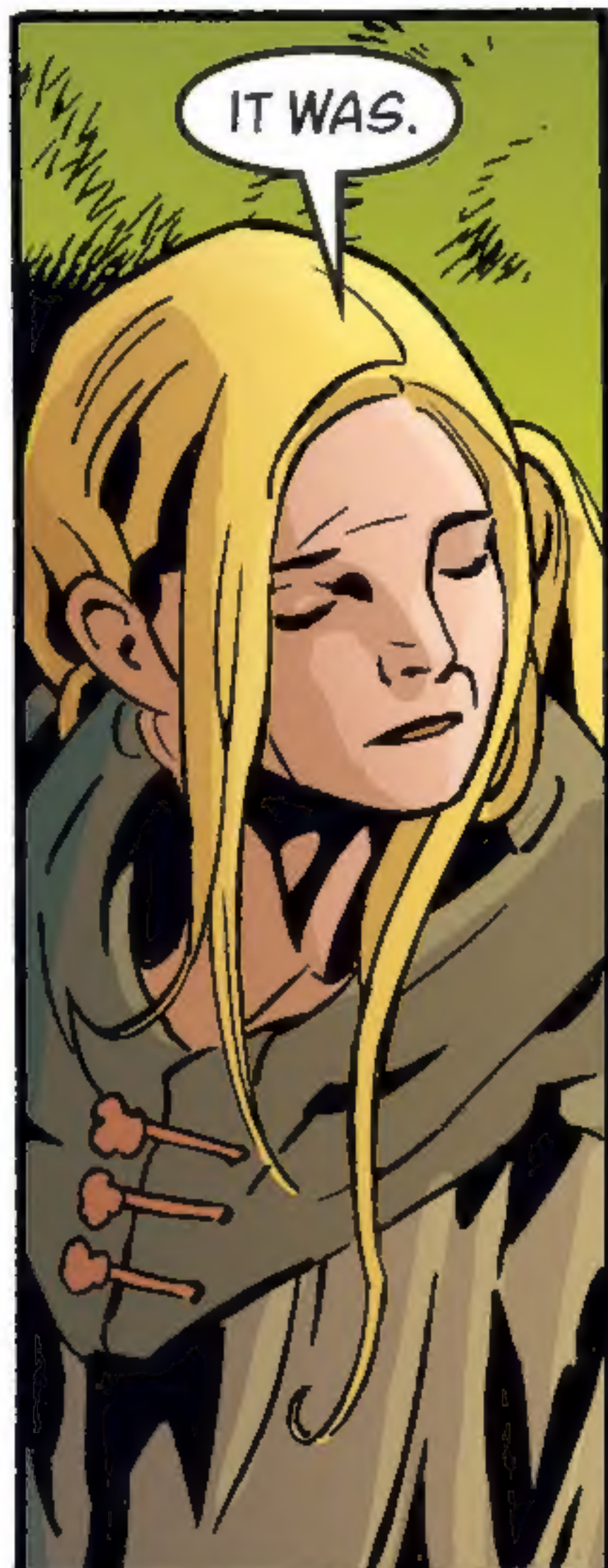
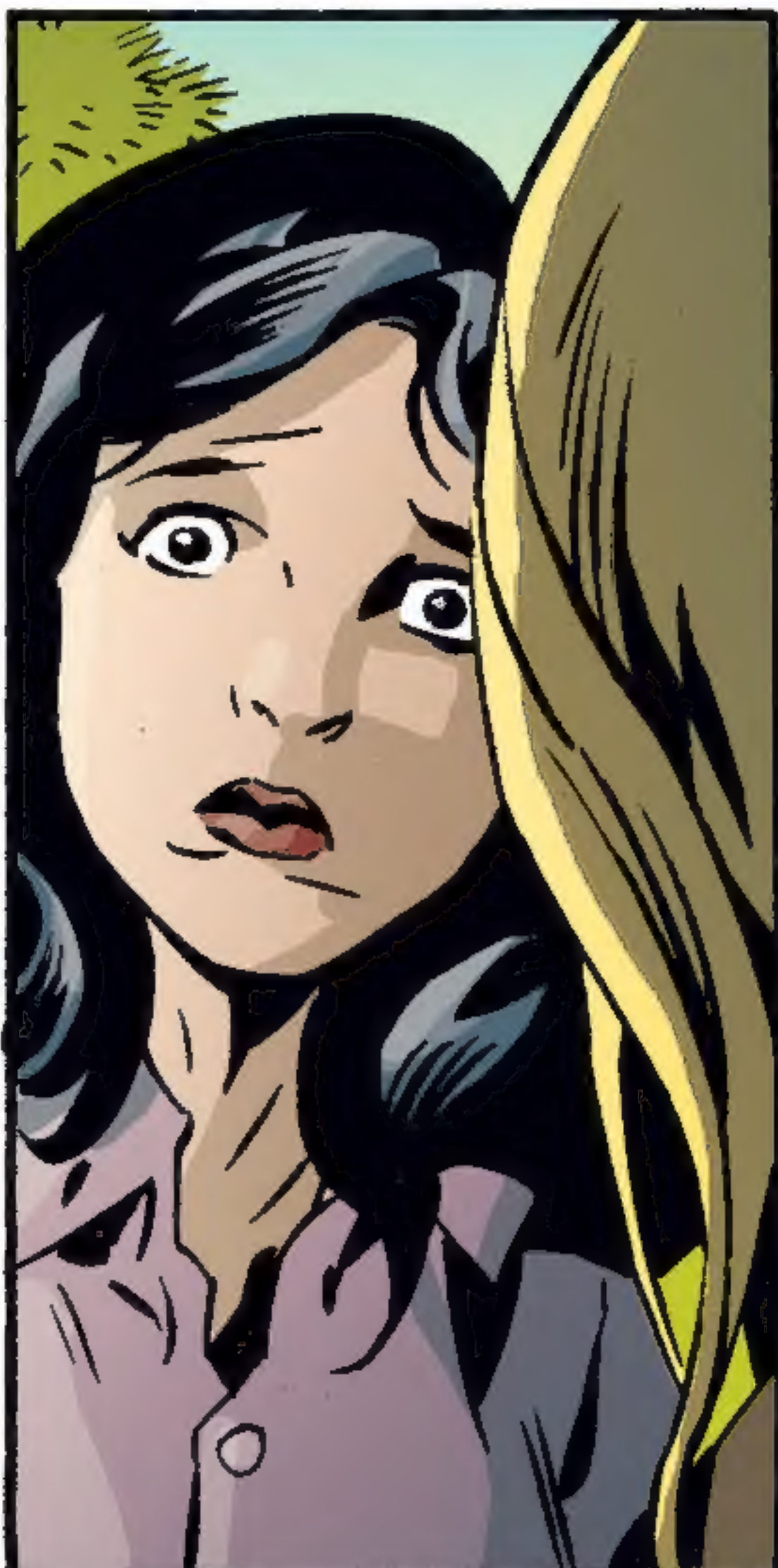
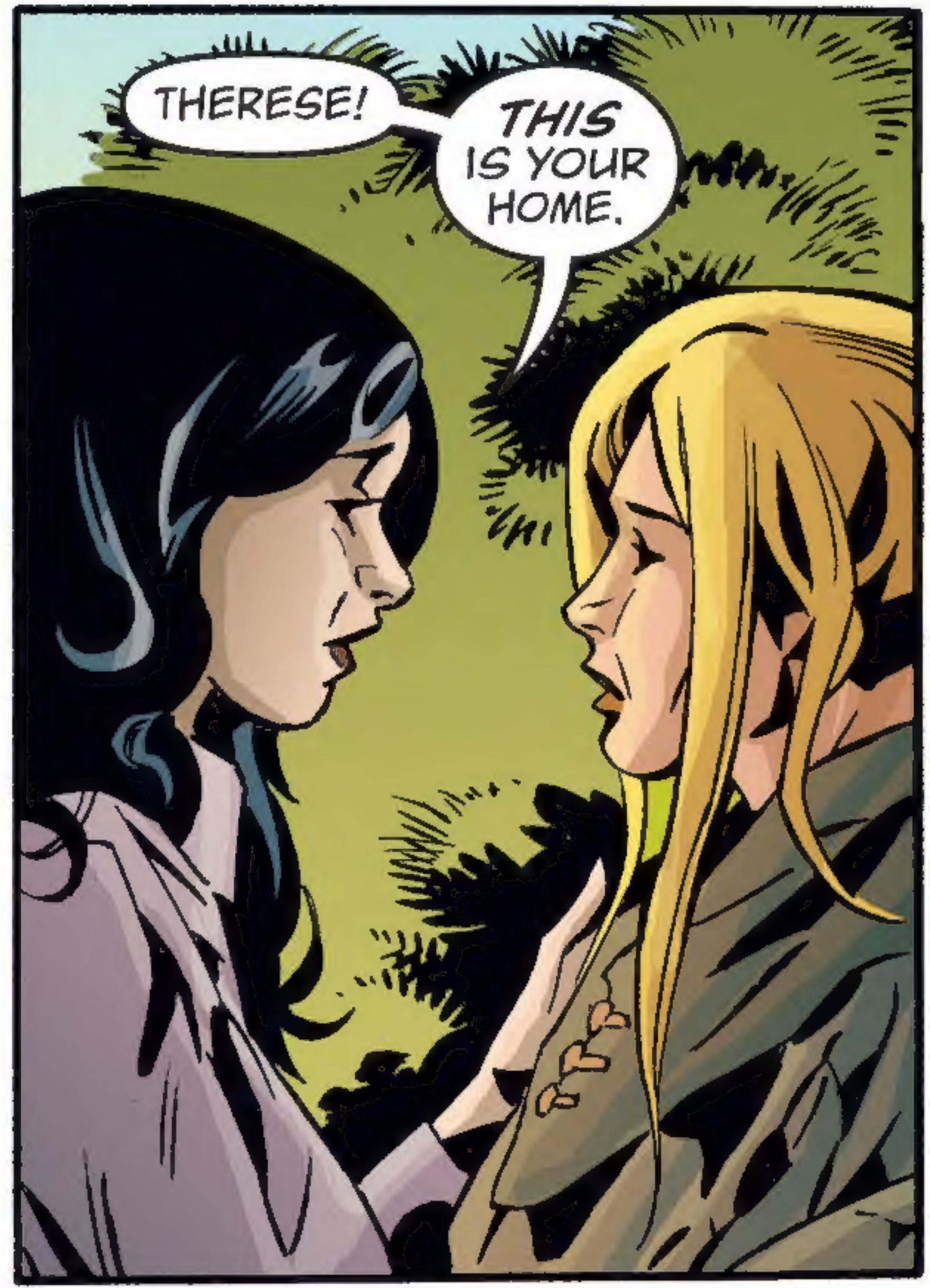
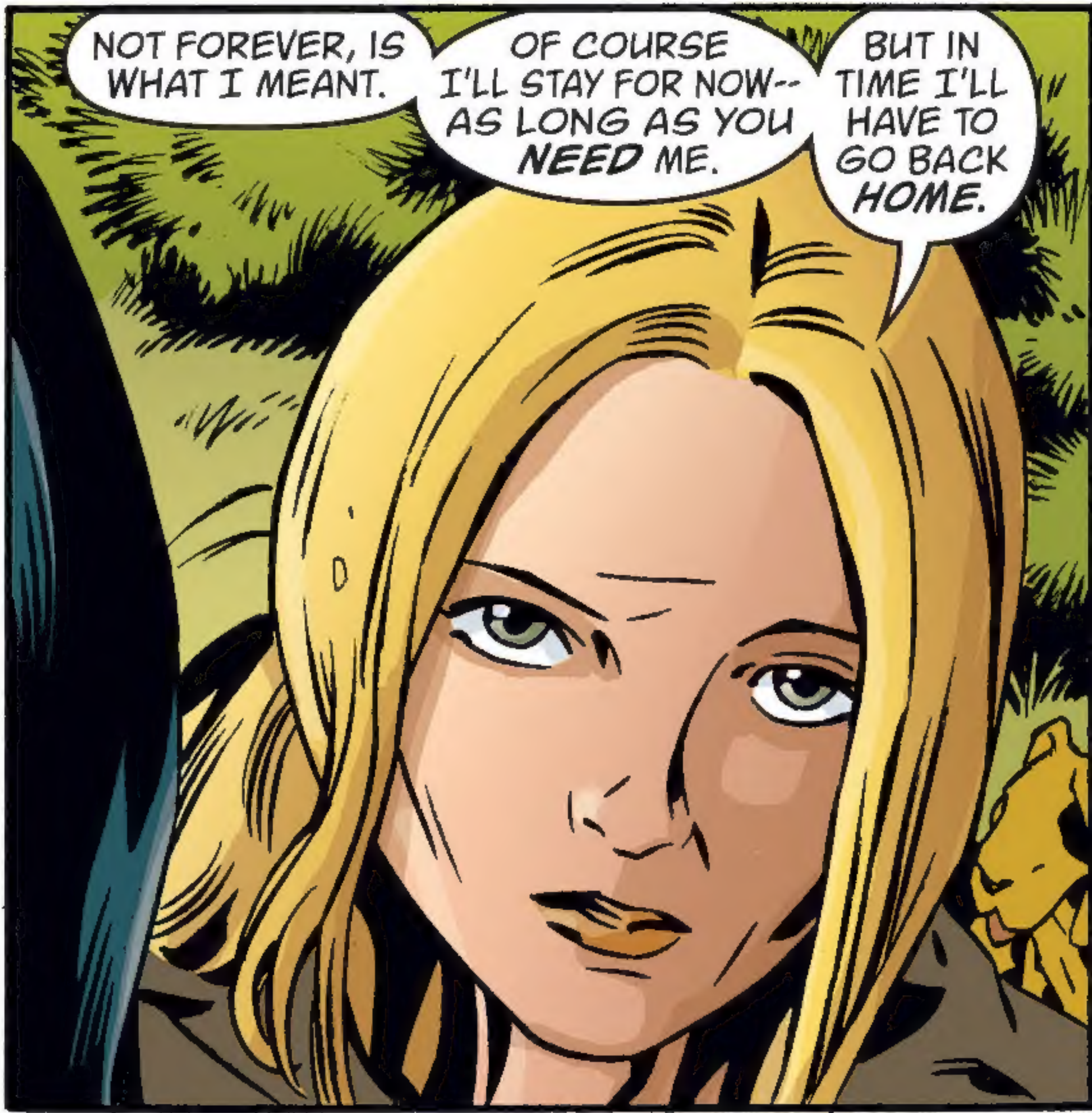
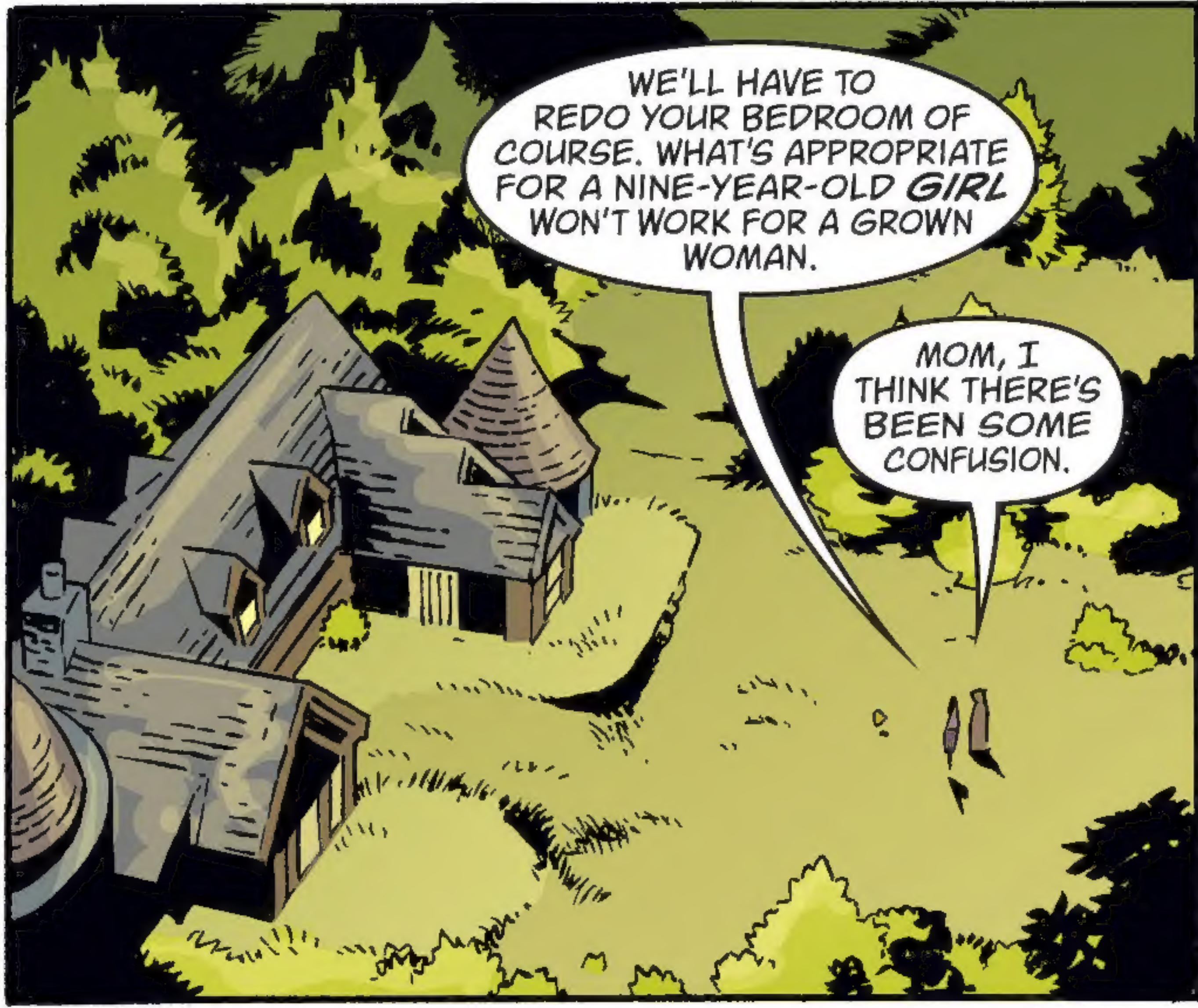
BASICALLY ANY BIRD WHO, DURING THE WAR OR SINCE, HAS GONE UP THE BEANSTALK, AND FROM THERE TO THE VARIOUS ISOLATED FABLE WORLDS.

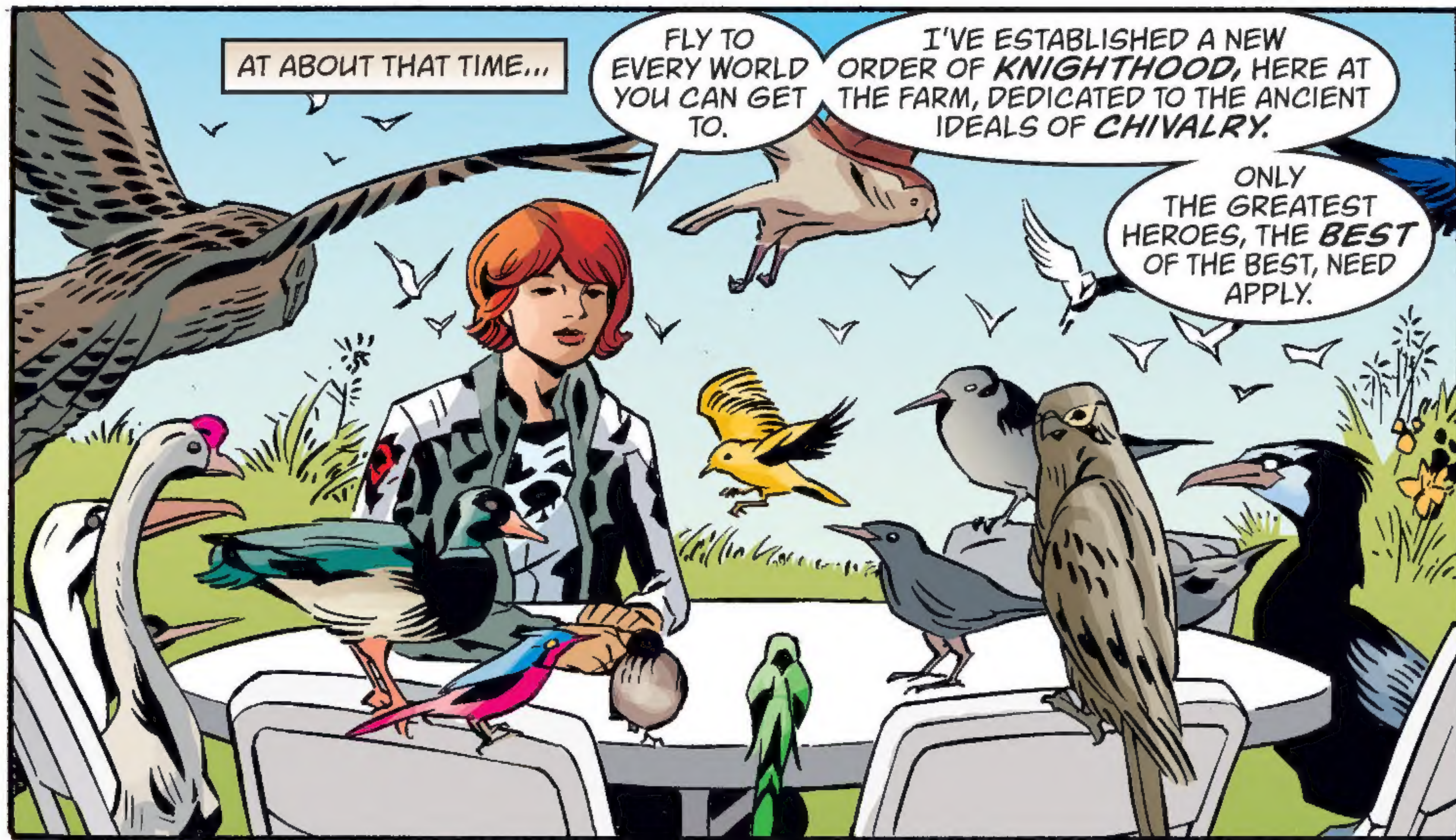
I CAN DO THAT.

NOW?

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE-- YES, PLEASE.







AT ABOUT THAT TIME...

FLY TO EVERY WORLD YOU CAN GET TO.

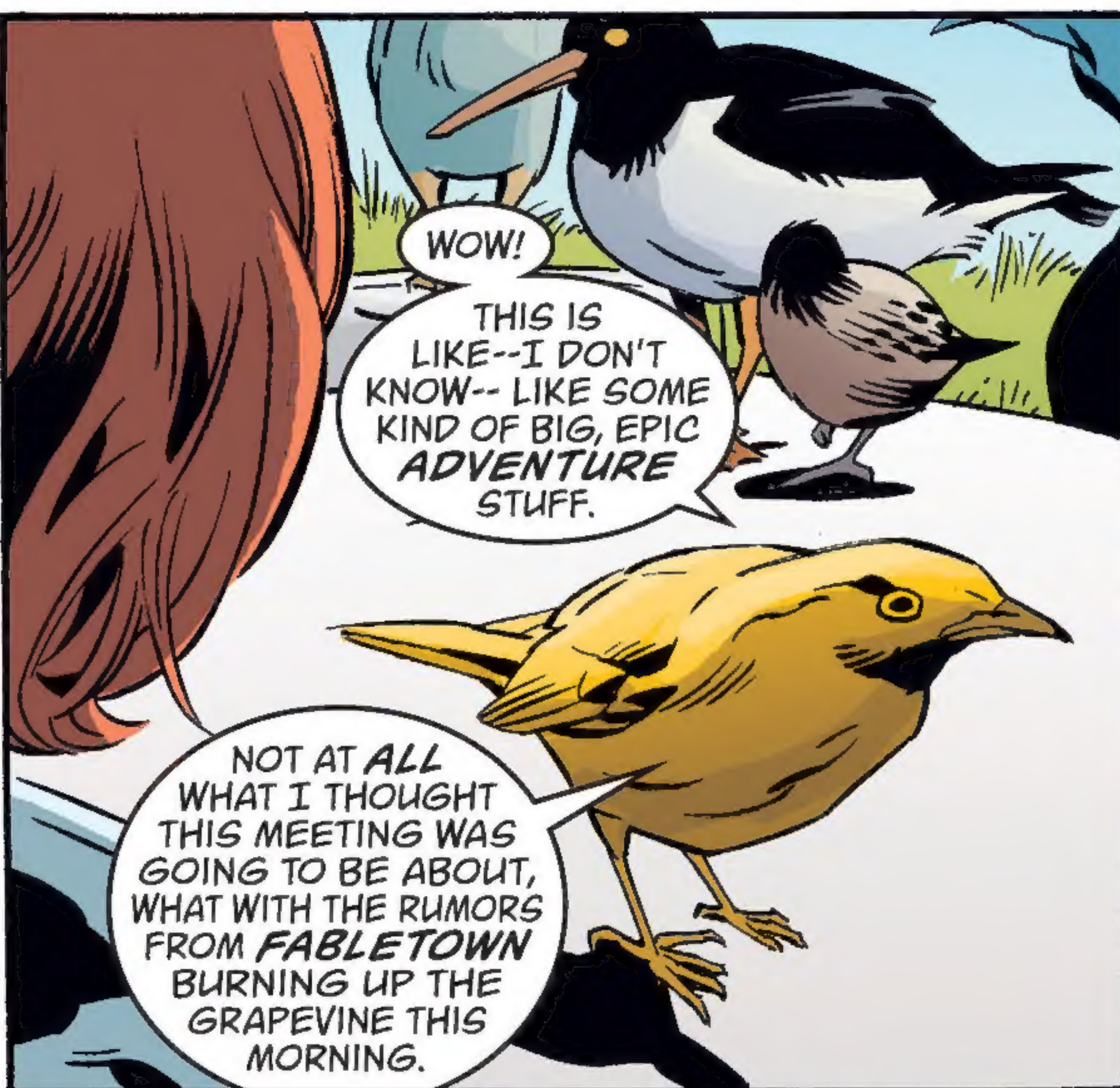
I'VE ESTABLISHED A NEW ORDER OF *KNIGHTHOOD*, HERE AT THE FARM, DEDICATED TO THE ANCIENT IDEALS OF *CHIVALRY*.

ONLY THE GREATEST HEROES, THE *BEST OF THE BEST*, NEED APPLY.



BULLIES, THUGS AND ASSHOLES WILL BE WEEDED OUT--THROUGH A MASSIVE APPLICATION OF CONCENTRATED *FIREPOWER*, IF NECESSARY.

THAT'S THE NEWS. PLEASE SPREAD IT FAR AND WIDE, BUT DO BE *CAREFUL* DOING IT.



WOW!

THIS IS LIKE--I DON'T KNOW-- LIKE SOME KIND OF BIG, EPIC ADVENTURE STUFF.

NOT AT ALL WHAT I THOUGHT THIS MEETING WAS GOING TO BE ABOUT, WHAT WITH THE RUMORS FROM *FABLETOWN* BURNING UP THE GRAPEVINE THIS MORNING.



WHAT RUMORS?

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD YET?

ASSUME I *HAVEN'T*, SINCE I'VE BEEN OUT HERE ALL MORNING.



PRINCE BRANDISH IS *ALIVE* AGAIN.

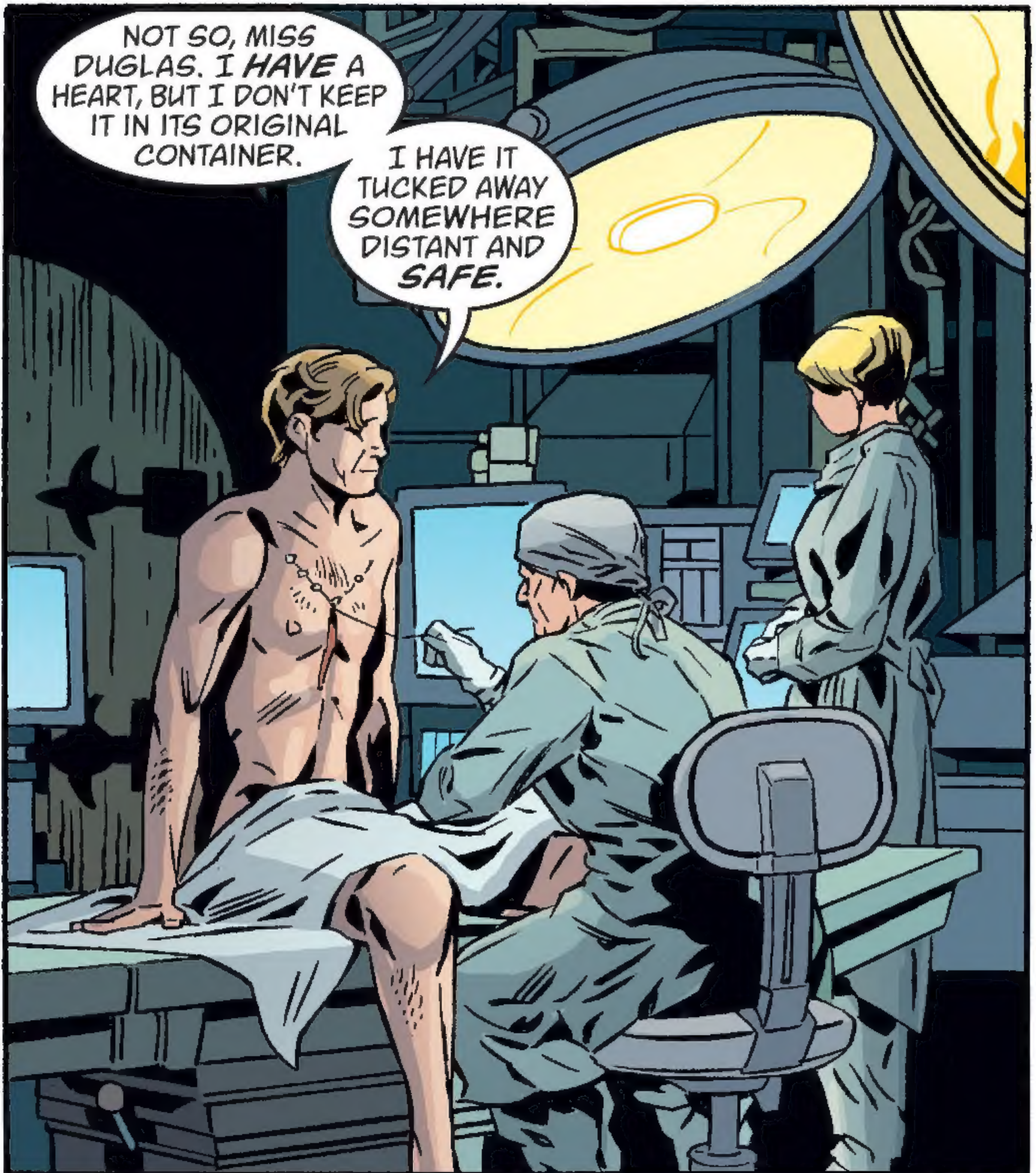
SAT RIGHT UP ON THE SLAB, WITH HIS *GUTS* HANGING OUT--S'WHAT I HEARD.



OH?

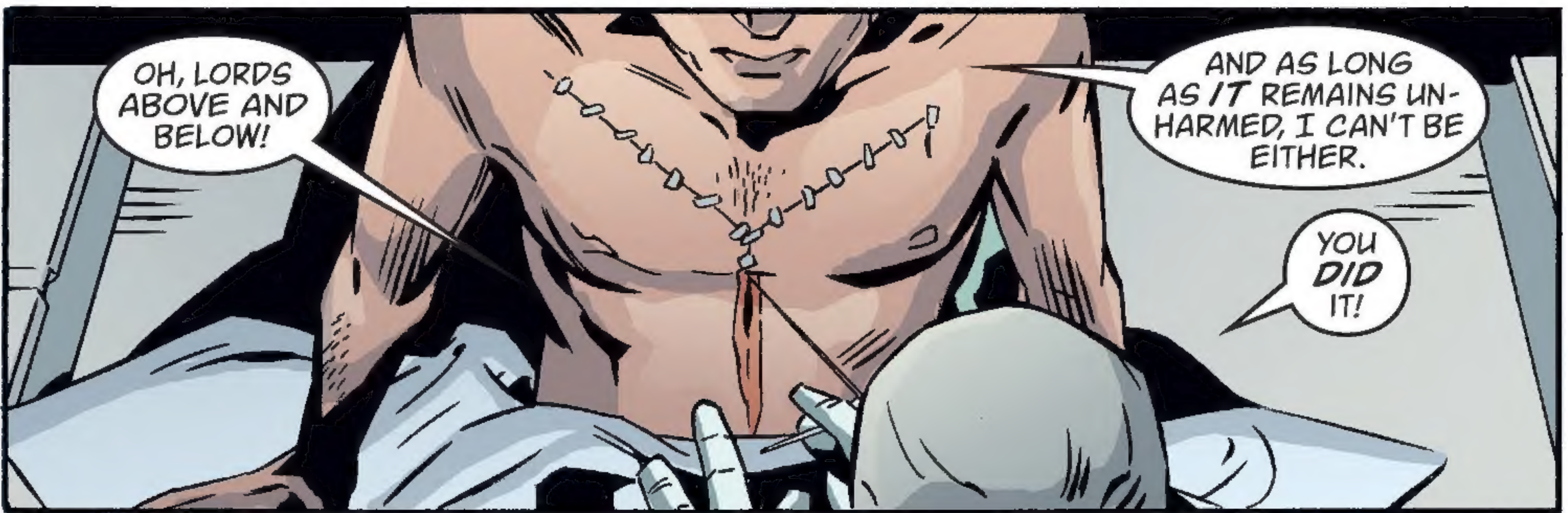


SO, YOU'RE LITERALLY A HEARTLESS BASTARD.



NOT SO, MISS DUGLAS. I HAVE A HEART, BUT I DON'T KEEP IT IN ITS ORIGINAL CONTAINER.

I HAVE IT TUCKED AWAY SOMEWHERE DISTANT AND SAFE.



OH, LORDS ABOVE AND BELOW!

AND AS LONG AS IT REMAINS UNHARMED, I CAN'T BE EITHER.

YOU DID IT!



DEATH CANNOT CLAIM ME, AS LONG AS MY HEART CONTINUES TO BEAT, WITHIN ITS PROTECTIVE CHAMBER.

YOU PERFECTED THE RED KEEP PROCEDURE!



IS THAT WHAT IT'S CALLED?

YOUR HEART LOCKED AWAY IN A MIGHTY FORTRESS. EFFECTIVE INVULNERABILITY, AS LONG AS THE CONTAINER HOLDS.



THE TRICK IS KEEPING ITS LOCATION SECRET.

I WAS ONLY ABLE TO REMOVE *MINE* FOR SIX DAYS BEFORE IT BEGAN TO PETER OUT.



AND EVEN THEN I HAD TO REPLACE IT WITH A *PIG'S* HEART IN MY OWN CHEST, WHILE IT WAS REMOVED.

I *MUST* MEET THE PRACTITIONER WHO SOLVED IT!



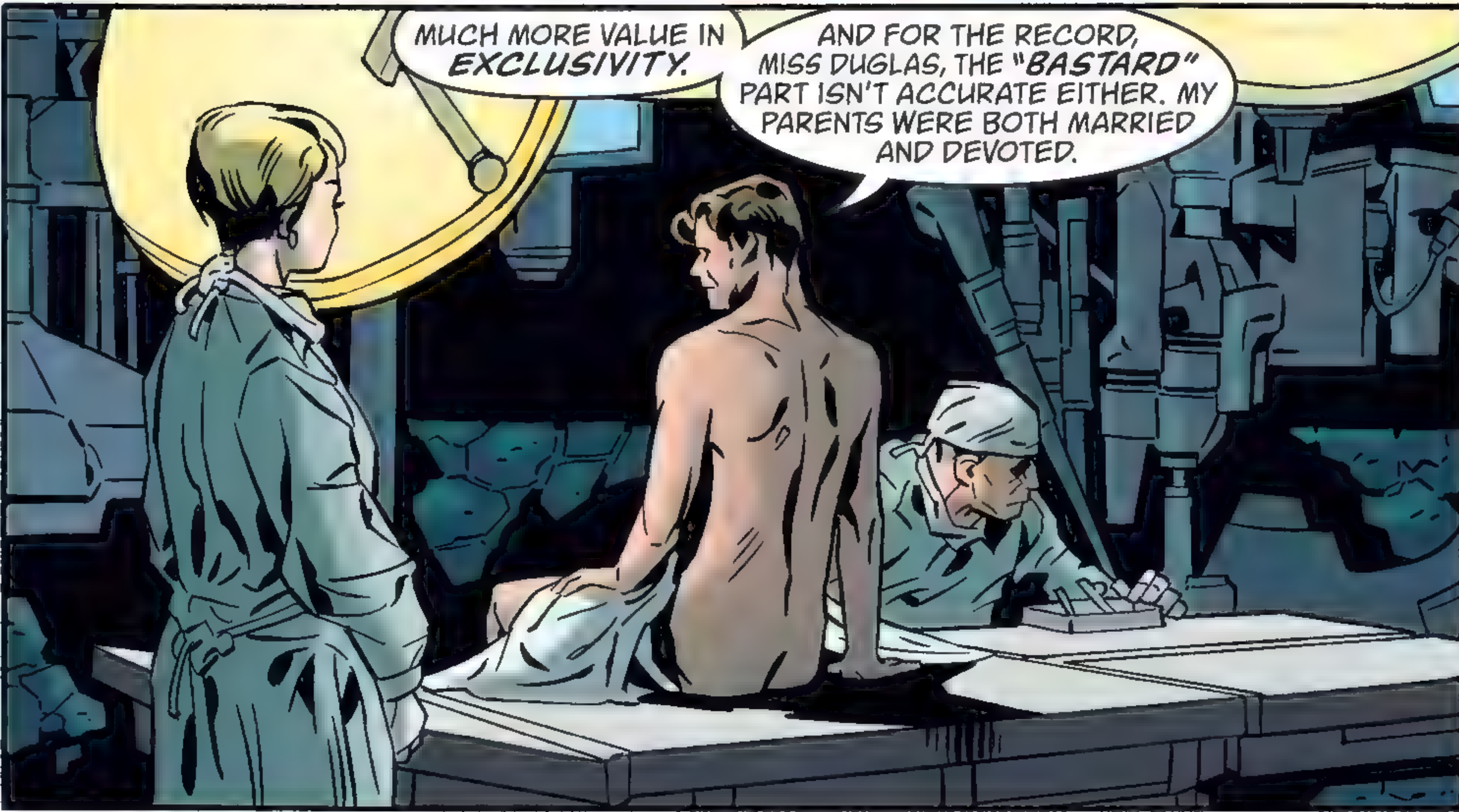
GOOD LUCK WITH THAT. YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIND HIS *GHOST* WHIMPERING IN SOME DARK AFTER-REALM.

NO!



POOR FELLOW DIED ON THE END OF MY DINNER KNIFE, WHEN I *FEASTED* HIM FOR HIS GRAND ACHIEVEMENT.

AFTER ALL, I COULDN'T HAVE HIM REPEATING HIS MASTERWORK ON *LESSER* SUBJECTS.



MUCH MORE VALUE IN *EXCLUSIVITY*.

AND FOR THE RECORD, MISS DUGLAS, THE "*BASTARD*" PART ISN'T ACCURATE EITHER. MY PARENTS WERE BOTH MARRIED AND DEVOTED.



MOM?



BRANDISH?

I SAW WHAT YOU DID WITH DADDY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

I DON'T LIKE IT. IT'S NASTY.



YOU'RE NASTY!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SON?

THE QUEEN SHOULD BE CHASTE AND PURE. ABOVE REPROACH. MY MOTHER SHOULDN'T ACT LIKE AN ANIMAL.



SON? WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO--?

TURN AWAY, MOTHER. SHUT YOUR EYES.

I'LL MAKE IT QUICK.

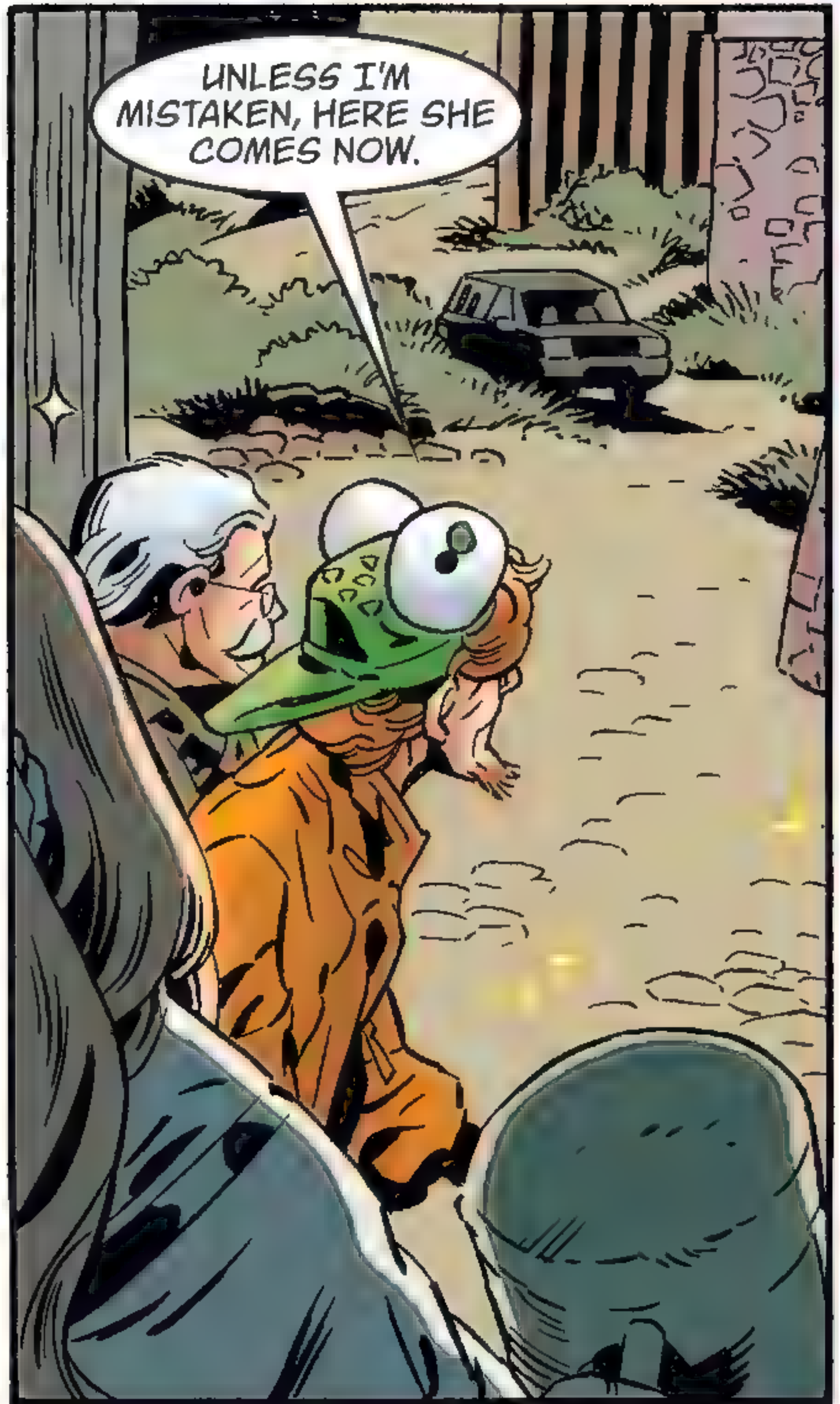


DEVOTED TO A FAULT, IN FACT.



WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT ROSE WANTS, AND THEN I'D LIKE TO GO SEE SNOW.

PAY OUR RESPECTS.

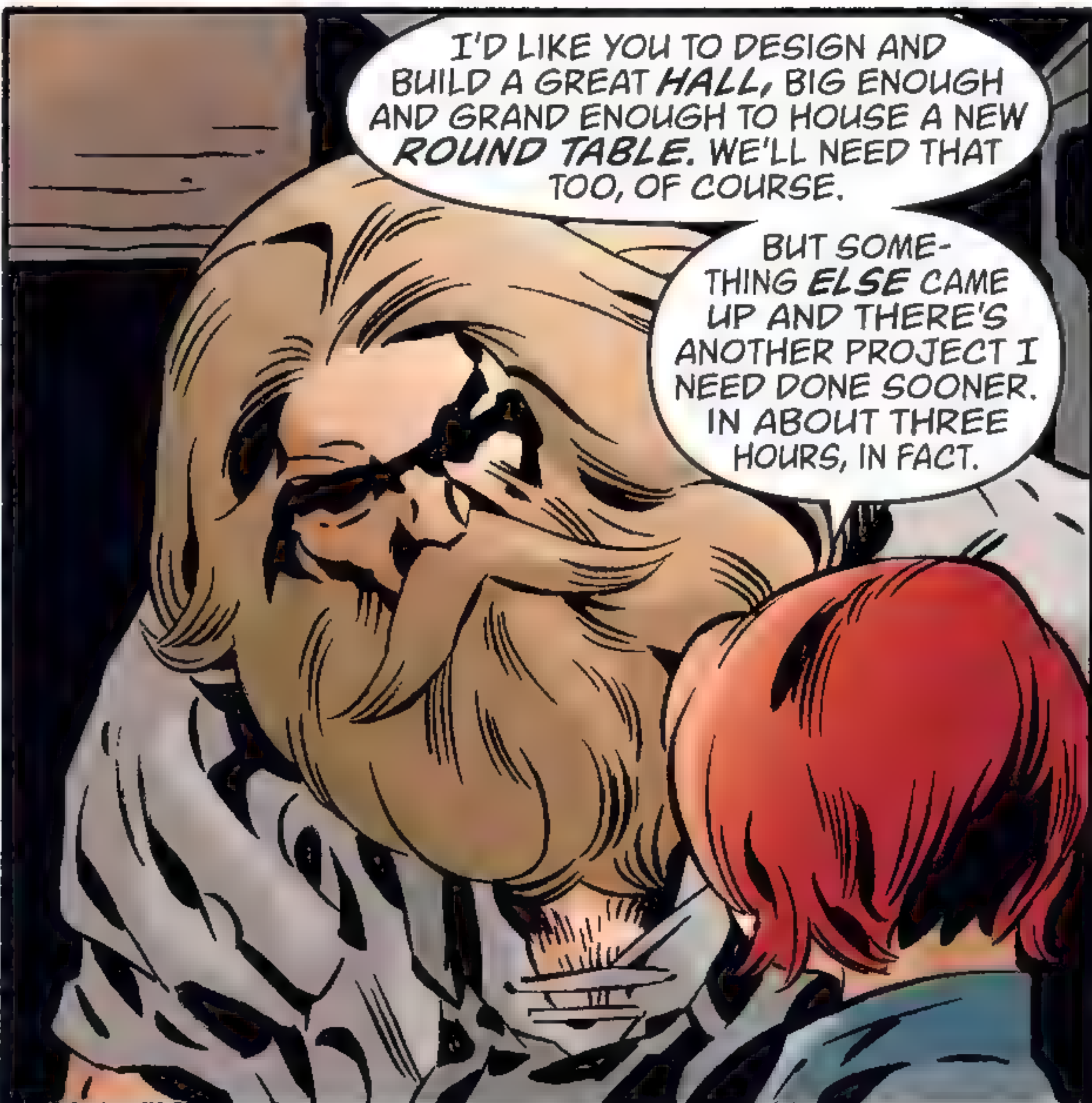


UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, HERE SHE COMES NOW.



OH, GOOD. YOU'RE HERE.

A GREAT BIG **THING** JUST CAME UP, SO I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR A LONG CONVERSATION NOW. JUST THE BULLET POINTS.



I'D LIKE YOU TO DESIGN AND BUILD A GREAT **HALL**, BIG ENOUGH AND GRAND ENOUGH TO HOUSE A NEW **ROUND TABLE**. WE'LL NEED THAT TOO, OF COURSE.

BUT SOMETHING **ELSE** CAME UP AND THERE'S ANOTHER PROJECT I NEED DONE SOONER. IN ABOUT THREE HOURS, IN FACT.



KING COLE WILL AUTHORIZE WHATEVER IT COSTS.

I WILL?

YOU WILL.

ELSEWHERE ON THE VAST LANDS OF THE FARM...

A NEW ORDER OF KNIGHTHOOD, YOU SAY?

WELL, THAT'S CERTAINLY... LET'S CALL IT INTERESTING.

THE REMOTE COTTAGE OF PETER PIPER AND BO PEEP.

BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO TELL HER I CAN'T BE PART OF IT.

I'VE HAD ALL THE ADVENTURE I WANT OUT OF ONE LIFETIME... EVEN A VERY LONG ONE.

GOOD.

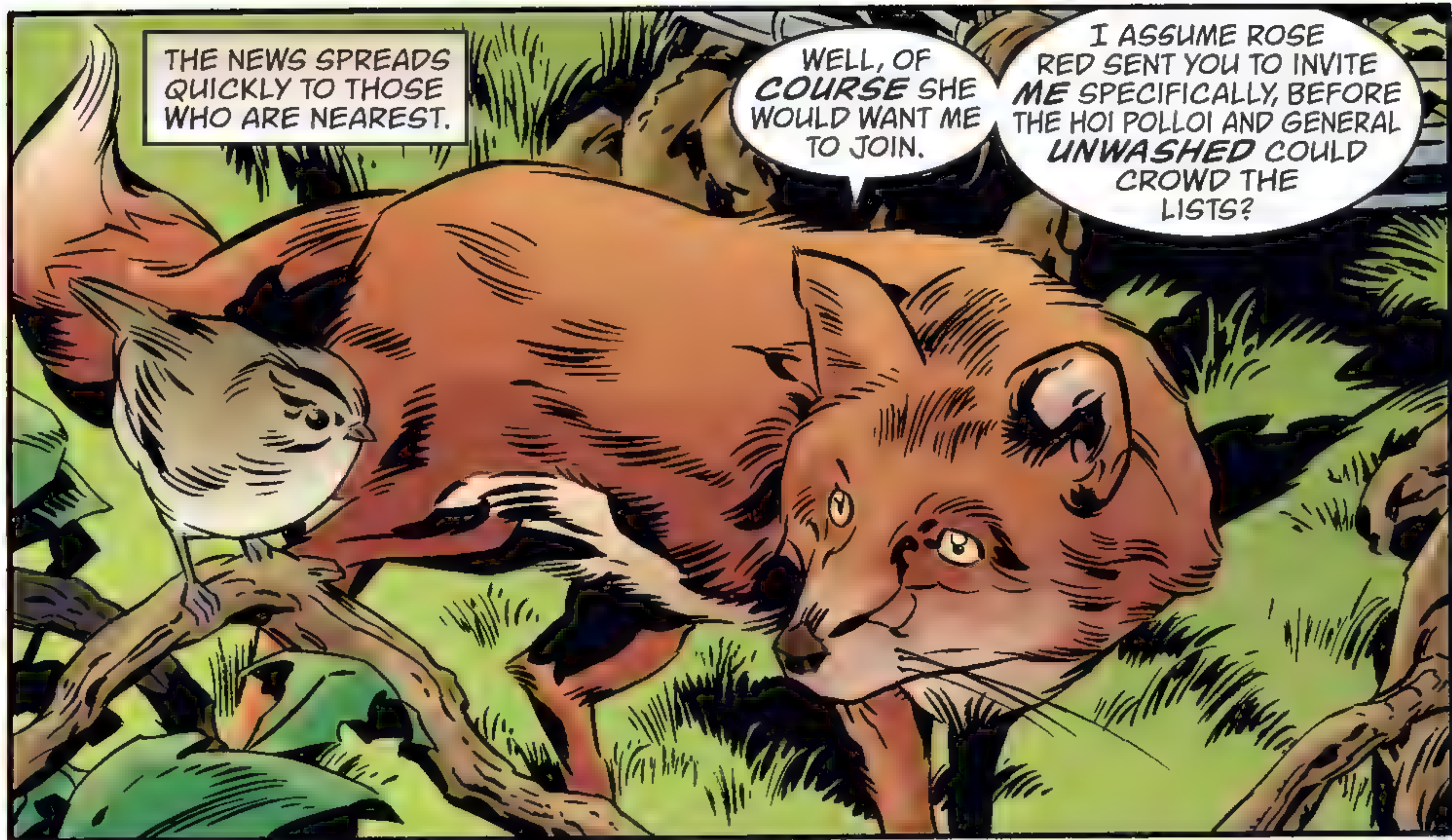
BO?

BECAUSE THERE SHOULD PROBABLY ONLY BE ONE NEW QUESTING KNIGHT PER FAMILY, AND I'M VERY INTERESTED.

HONEY?

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

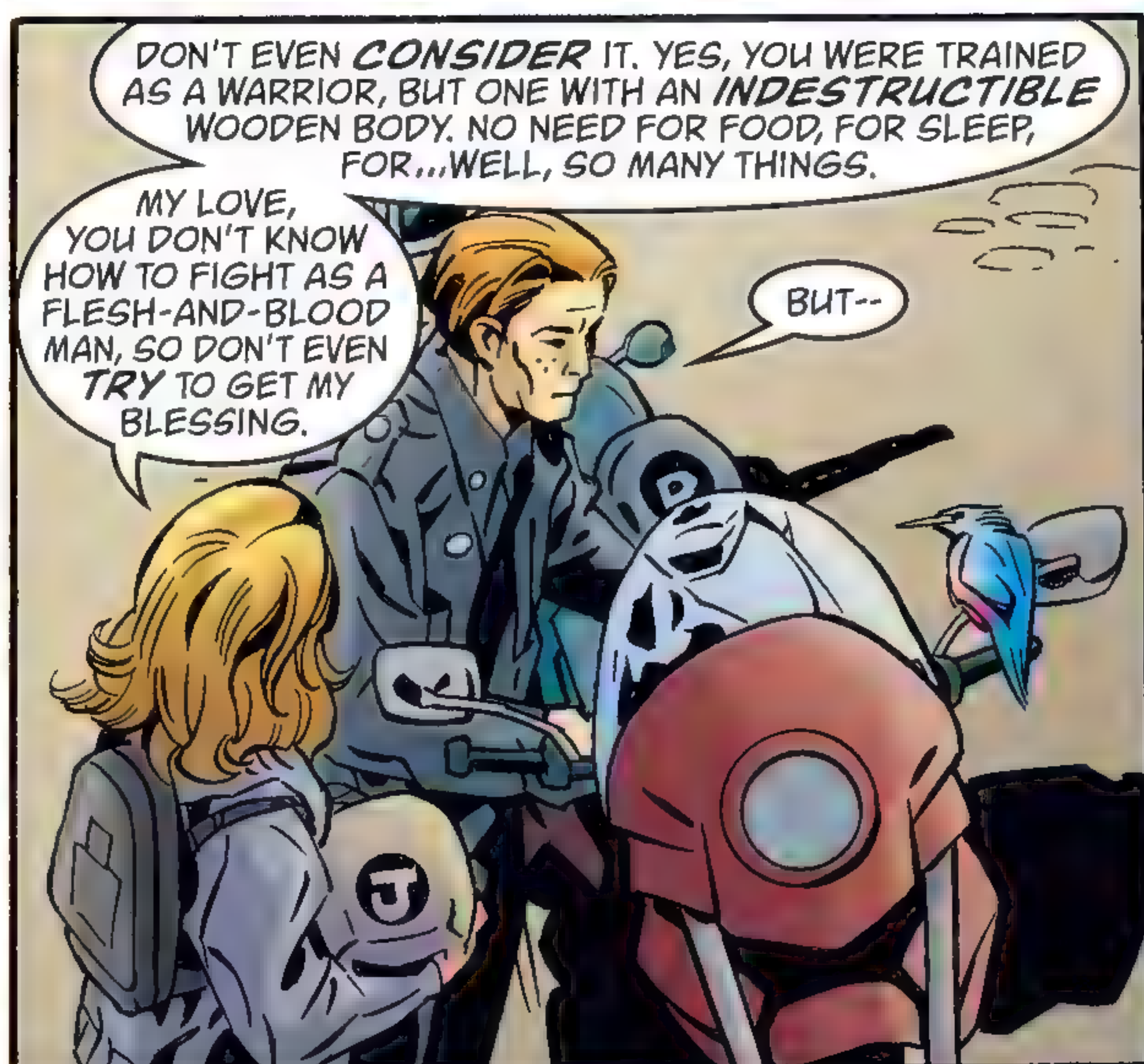
SO WILL THERE BE TRYOUTS, OR WHAT? HOW DOES ONE WIN HER SEAT AT THE TABLE?



THE NEWS SPREADS QUICKLY TO THOSE WHO ARE NEAREST.

WELL, OF COURSE SHE WOULD WANT ME TO JOIN.

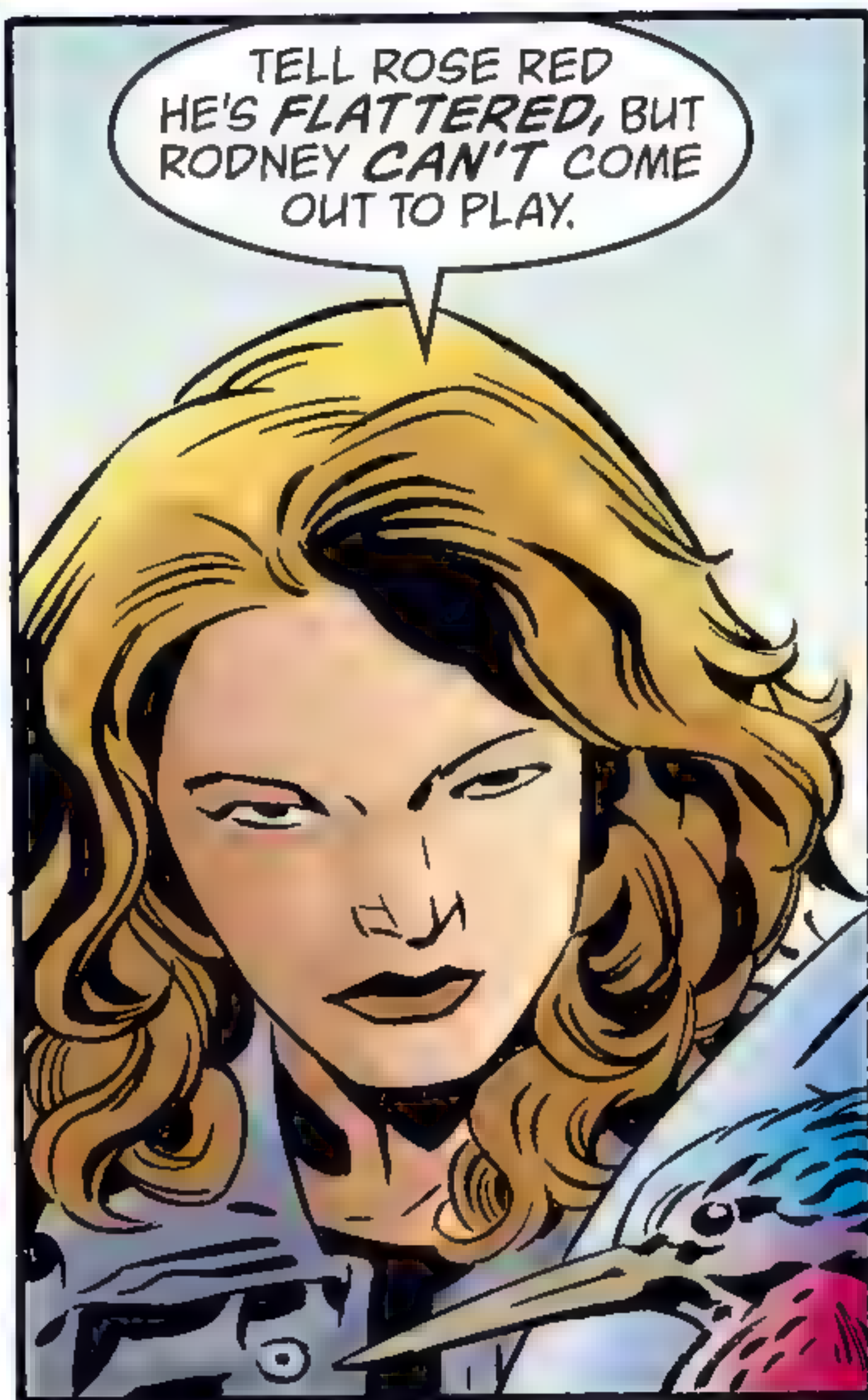
I ASSUME ROSE RED SENT YOU TO INVITE ME SPECIFICALLY, BEFORE THE HOI POLLOI AND GENERAL UNWASHED COULD CROWD THE LISTS?



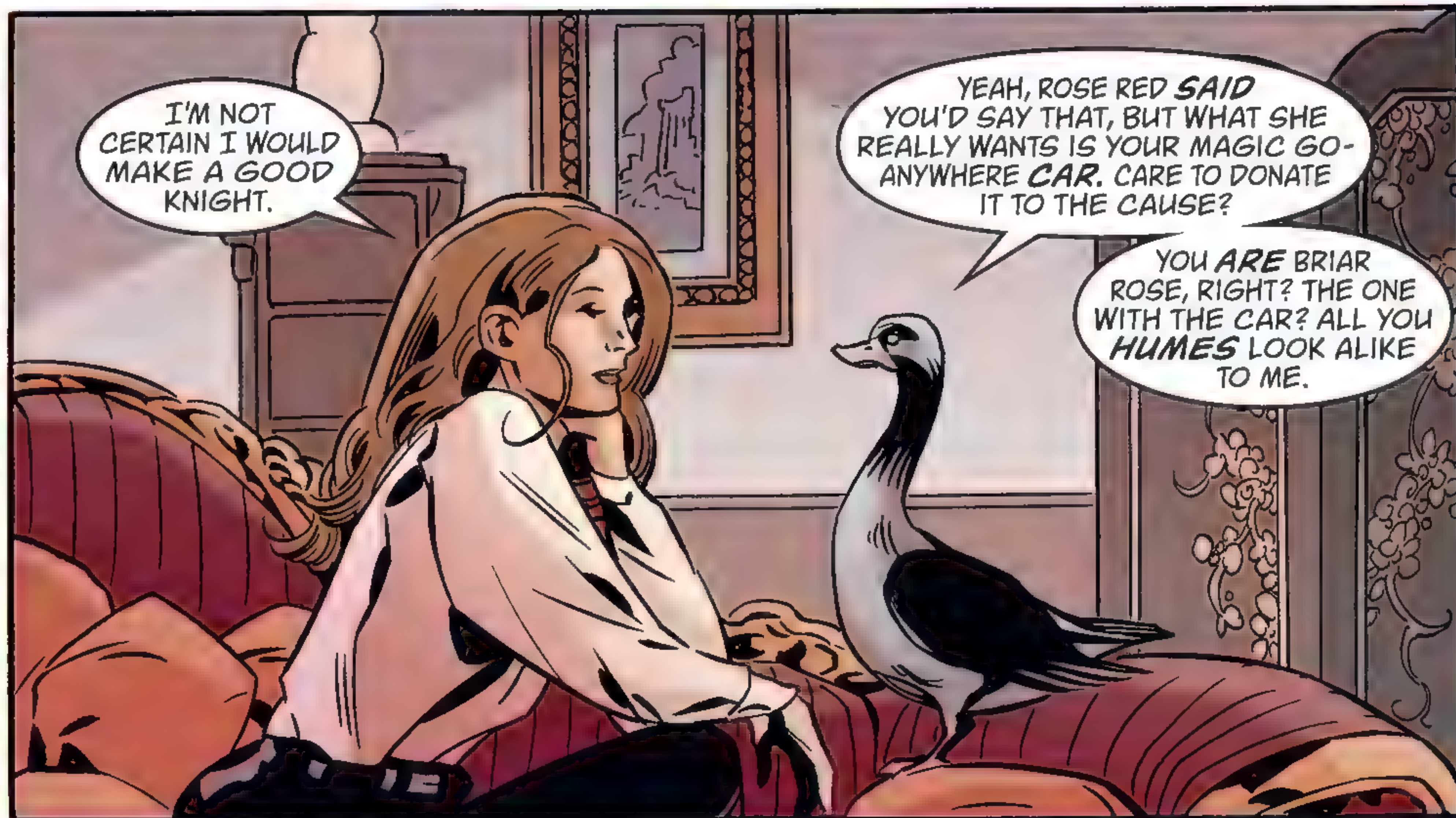
DON'T EVEN CONSIDER IT. YES, YOU WERE TRAINED AS A WARRIOR, BUT ONE WITH AN INDESTRUCTIBLE WOODEN BODY. NO NEED FOR FOOD, FOR SLEEP, FOR...WELL, SO MANY THINGS.

MY LOVE, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO FIGHT AS A FLESH-AND-BLOOD MAN, SO DON'T EVEN TRY TO GET MY BLESSING.

BUT--



TELL ROSE RED HE'S FLATTERED, BUT RODNEY CAN'T COME OUT TO PLAY.

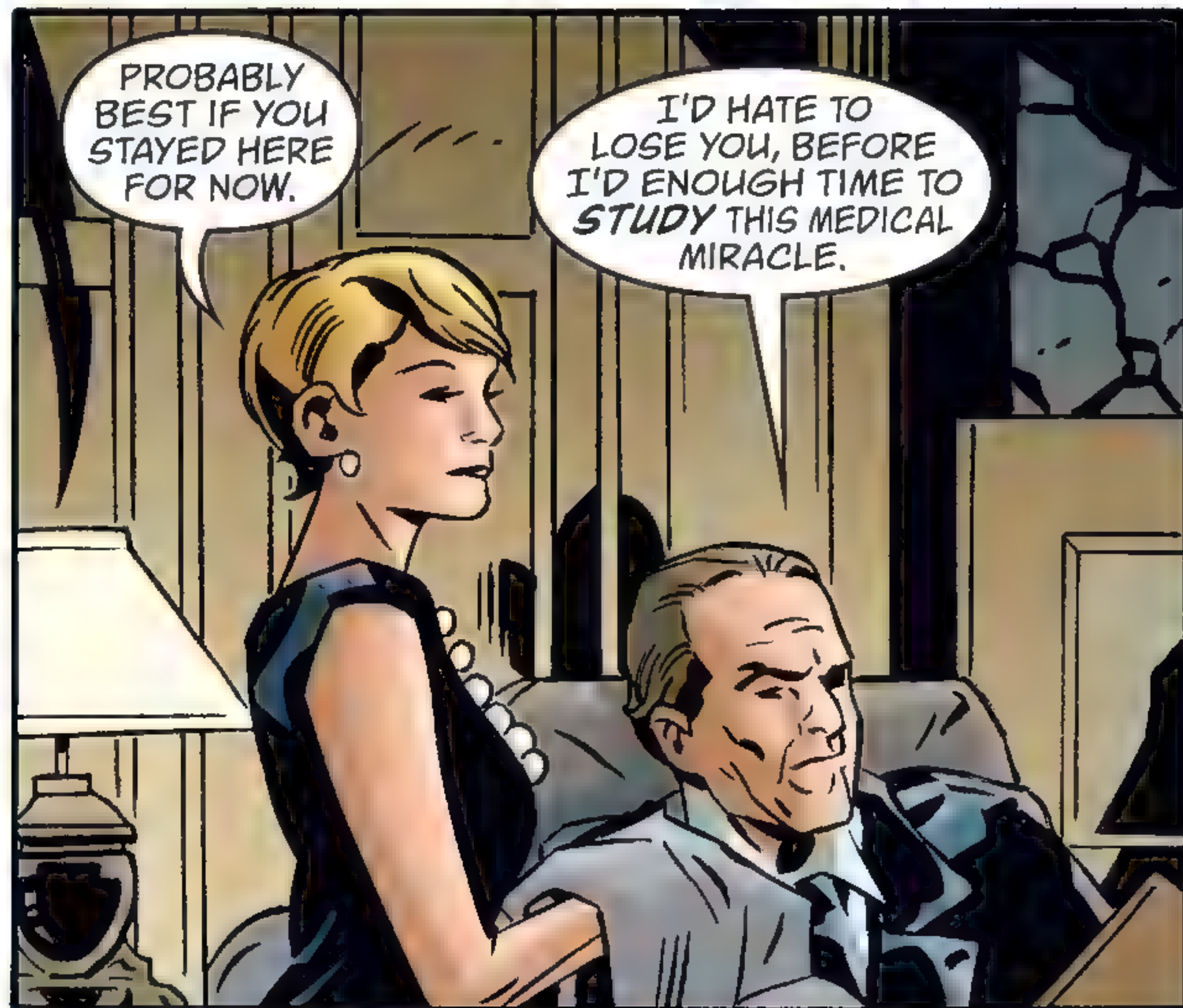
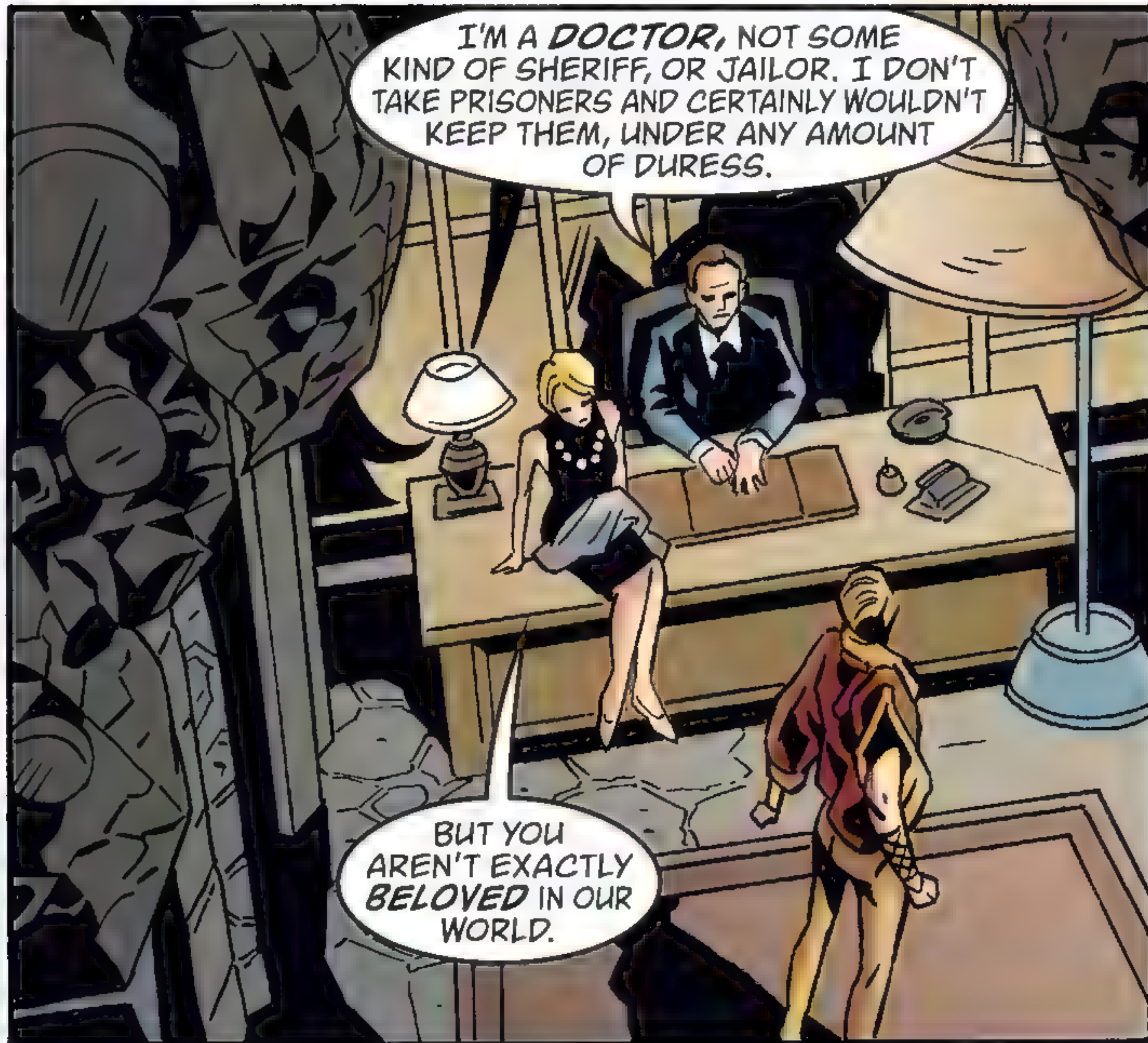


I'M NOT CERTAIN I WOULD MAKE A GOOD KNIGHT.

YEAH, ROSE RED SAID YOU'D SAY THAT, BUT WHAT SHE REALLY WANTS IS YOUR MAGIC GO-ANYWHERE CAR. CARE TO DONATE IT TO THE CAUSE?

YOU ARE BRIAR ROSE, RIGHT? THE ONE WITH THE CAR? ALL YOU HUMES LOOK ALIKE TO ME.







THIS IS WHAT THERE IS TO WORRY ABOUT.



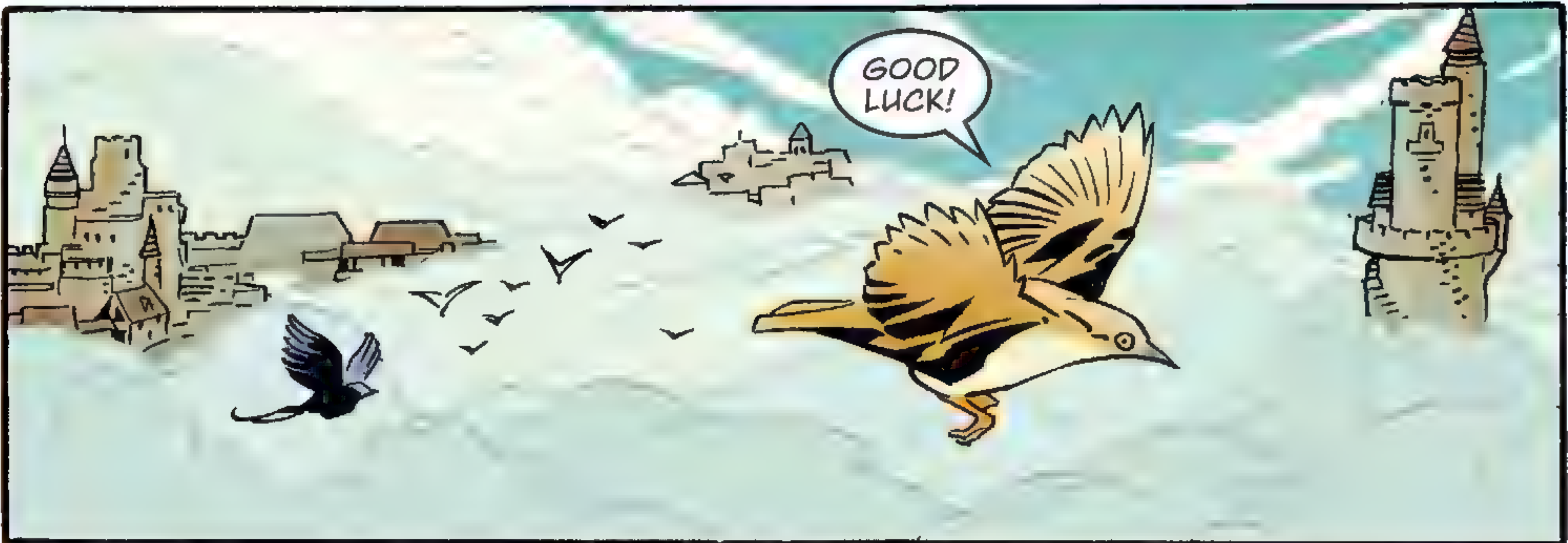
AND UP AT THE FARM...

I'VE NEVER FLOWN TO THE CLOUD KINGDOMS BEFORE.

THEY'RE PRETTY AT FIRST, BUT NOT ENOUGH **FORESTS**, AND EVERYTHING'S TOO BIG TO BE A PRACTICAL HOME FOR OUR KIND.

WATCH OUT FOR THE GIANT...WELL, THE GIANT **EVERYTHING**, AS FAR AS THAT GOES. LOTS OF FOOD BUGS UP HERE BIG ENOUGH TO GET **REVENGE** ON TINY VERSIONS OF WHAT EATS THEM.

LOOK FOR THIN AREAS IN THE **CLOUDBLOOR**. THOSE LEAD TO THE OTHER WORLDS.



GOOD LUCK!

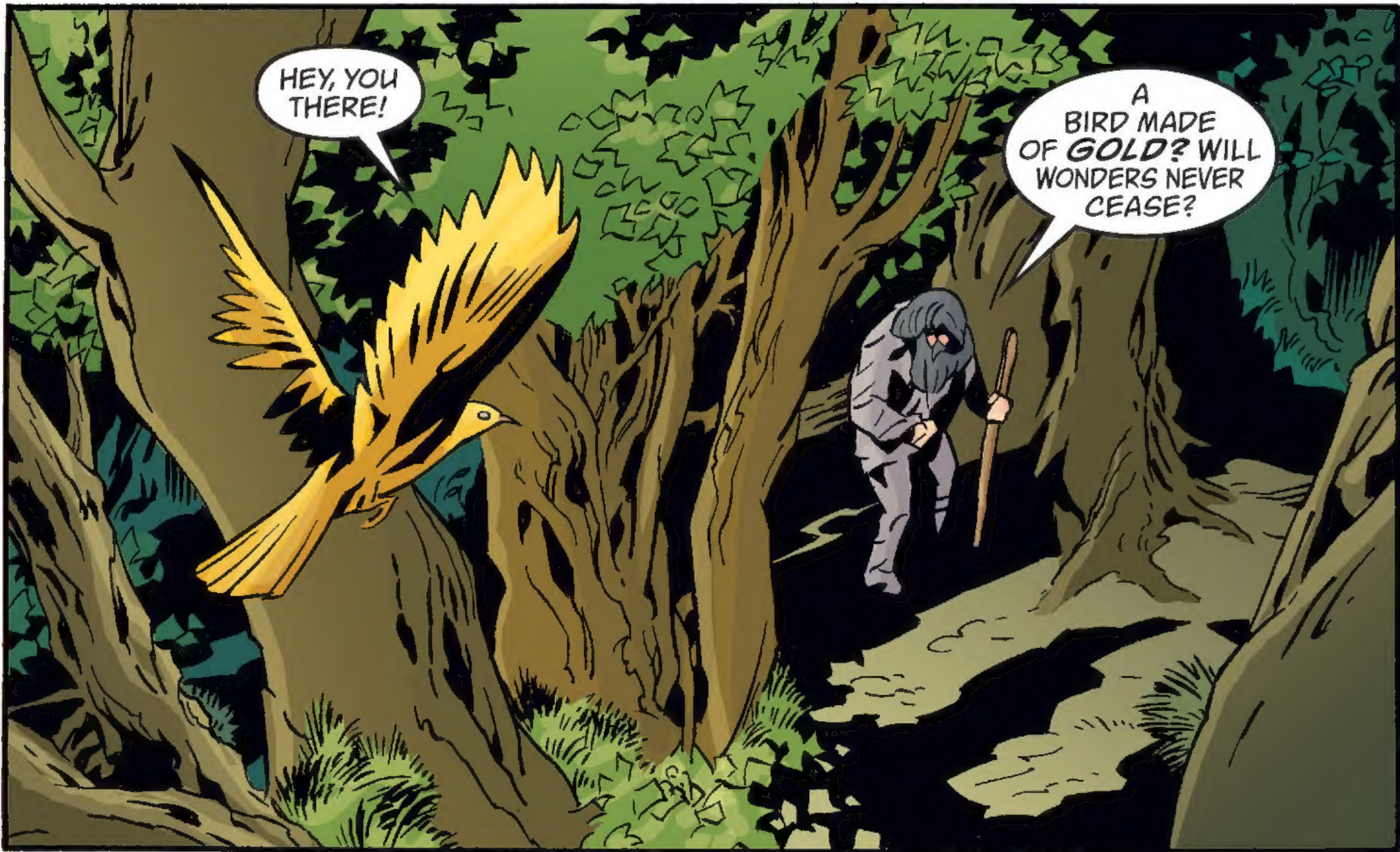


THIS SHOULD DO AS WELL AS ANY.



HMMM...





HEY, YOU THERE!

A BIRD MADE OF GOLD? WILL WONDERS NEVER CEASE?



AN UNUSUAL THING TO SEE ON ANY DAY.

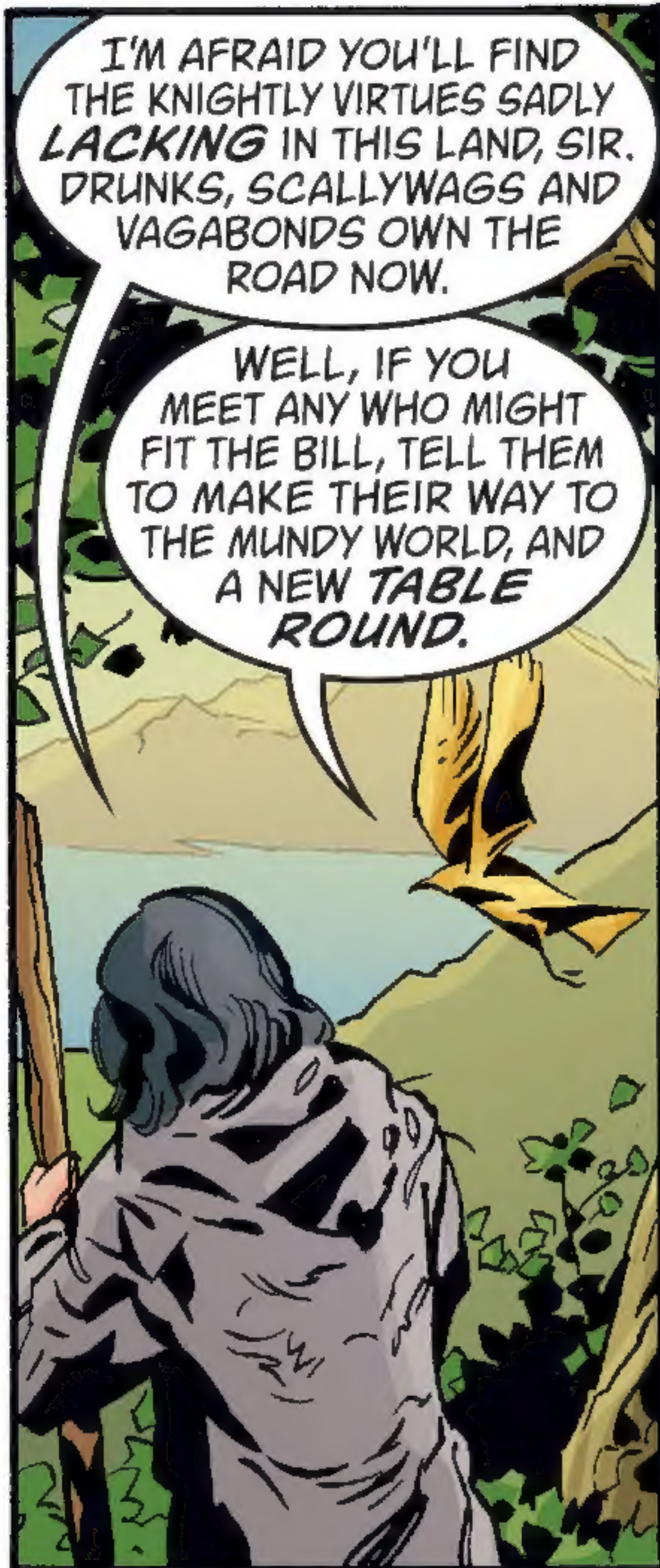
I'M ON A QUEST FOR HEROES.

CHAMPION TYPES, FOR A NEW ORDER OF KNIGHTHOOD.



DO YOU KNOW ANYONE LIKE THAT, JUST TO--Y'KNOW--POINT ME IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

NOBLE TYPES, WHO'D KEEP TO AN OATH.



I'M AFRAID YOU'LL FIND THE KNIGHTLY VIRTUES SADLY LACKING IN THIS LAND, SIR. DRUNKS, SCALLYWAGS AND VAGABONDS OWN THE ROAD NOW.

WELL, IF YOU MEET ANY WHO MIGHT FIT THE BILL, TELL THEM TO MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE MUNDY WORLD, AND A NEW TABLE ROUND.



A RESTORED ROUND TABLE?





THERE YOU ARE.

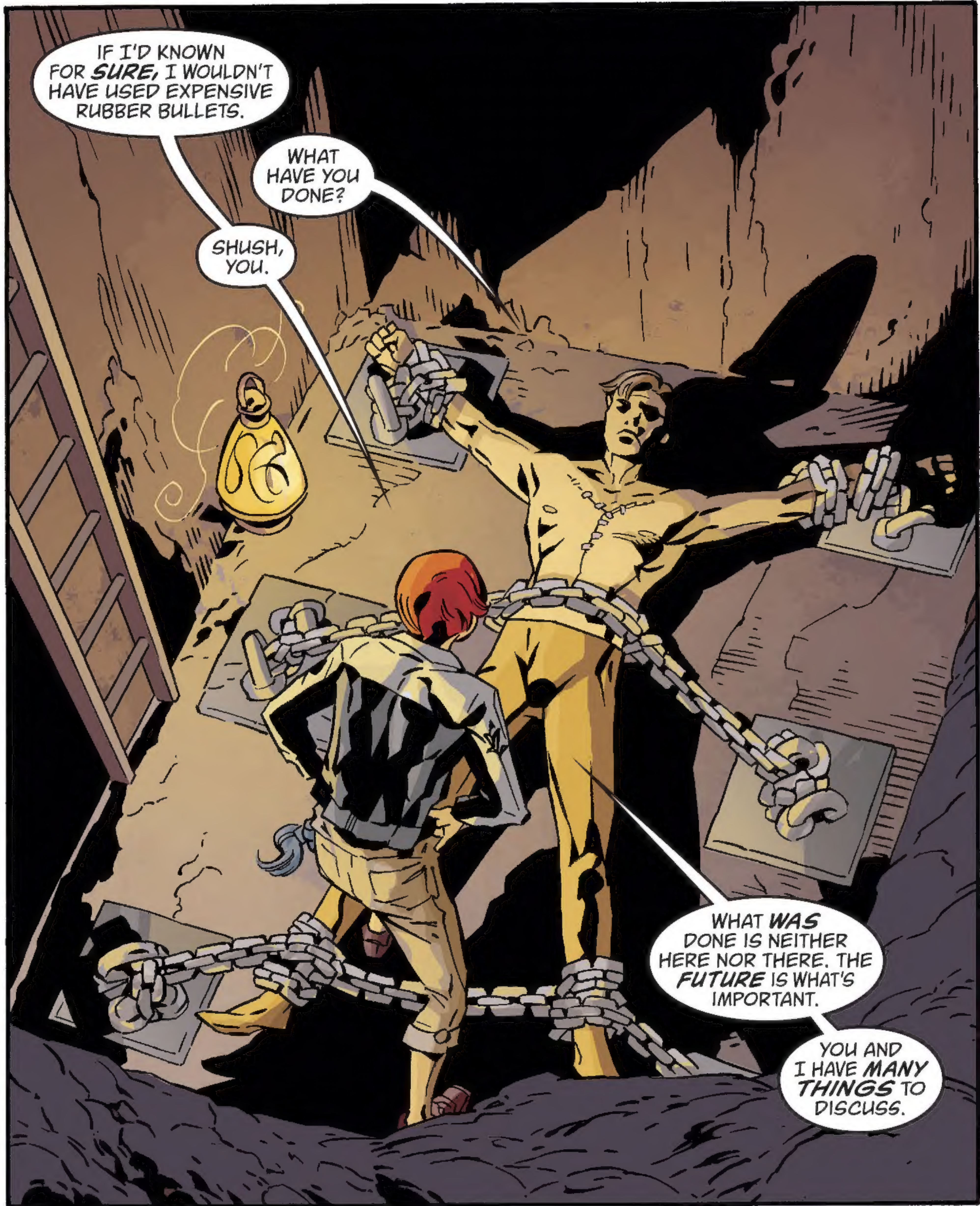


COMING BACK TO US AT LAST.



YOU REALLY CAN'T BE KILLED?

REMARK-ABLE.



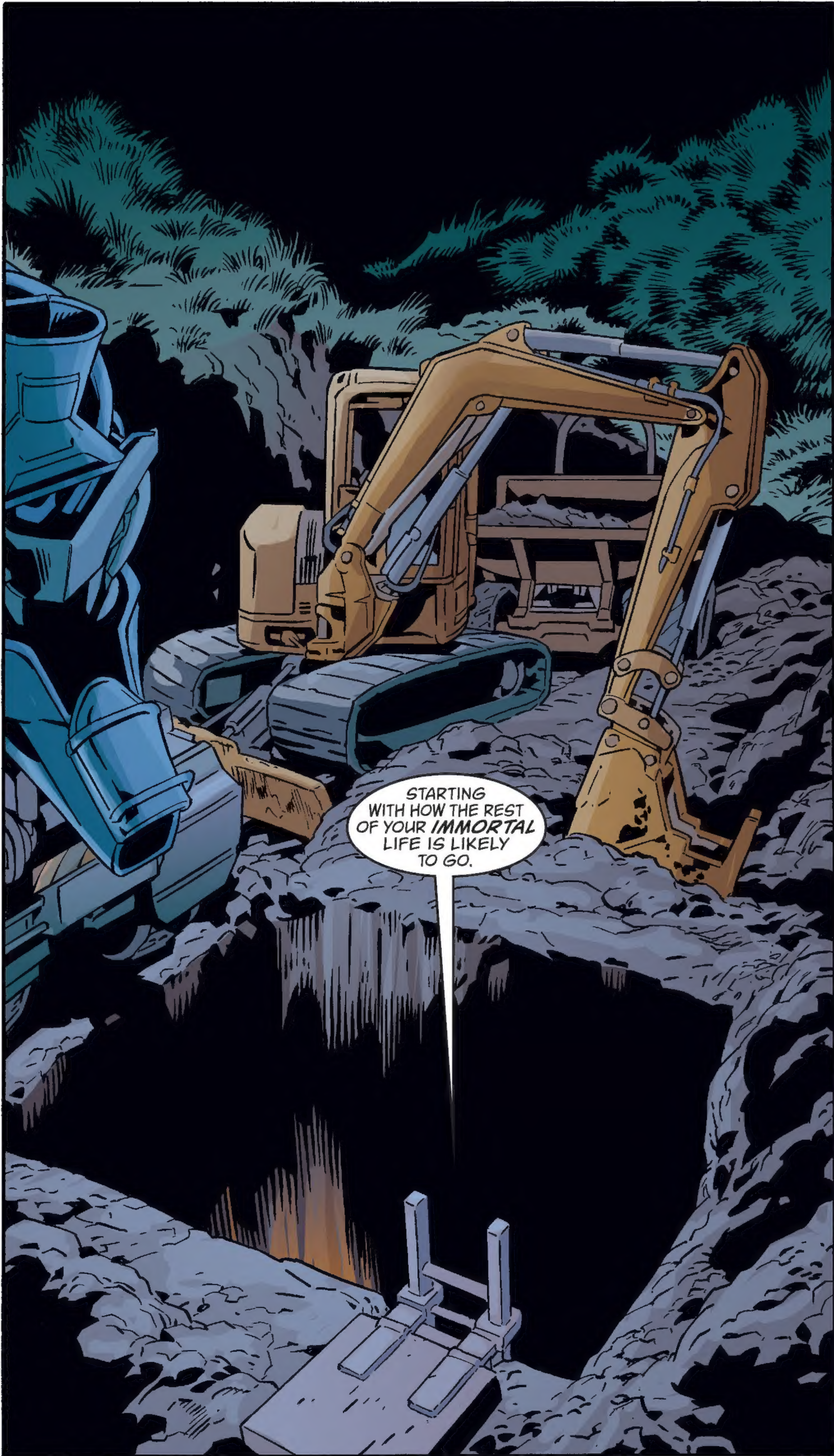
IF I'D KNOWN FOR *SURE*, I WOULDN'T HAVE USED EXPENSIVE RUBBER BULLETS.

SHUSH, YOU.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

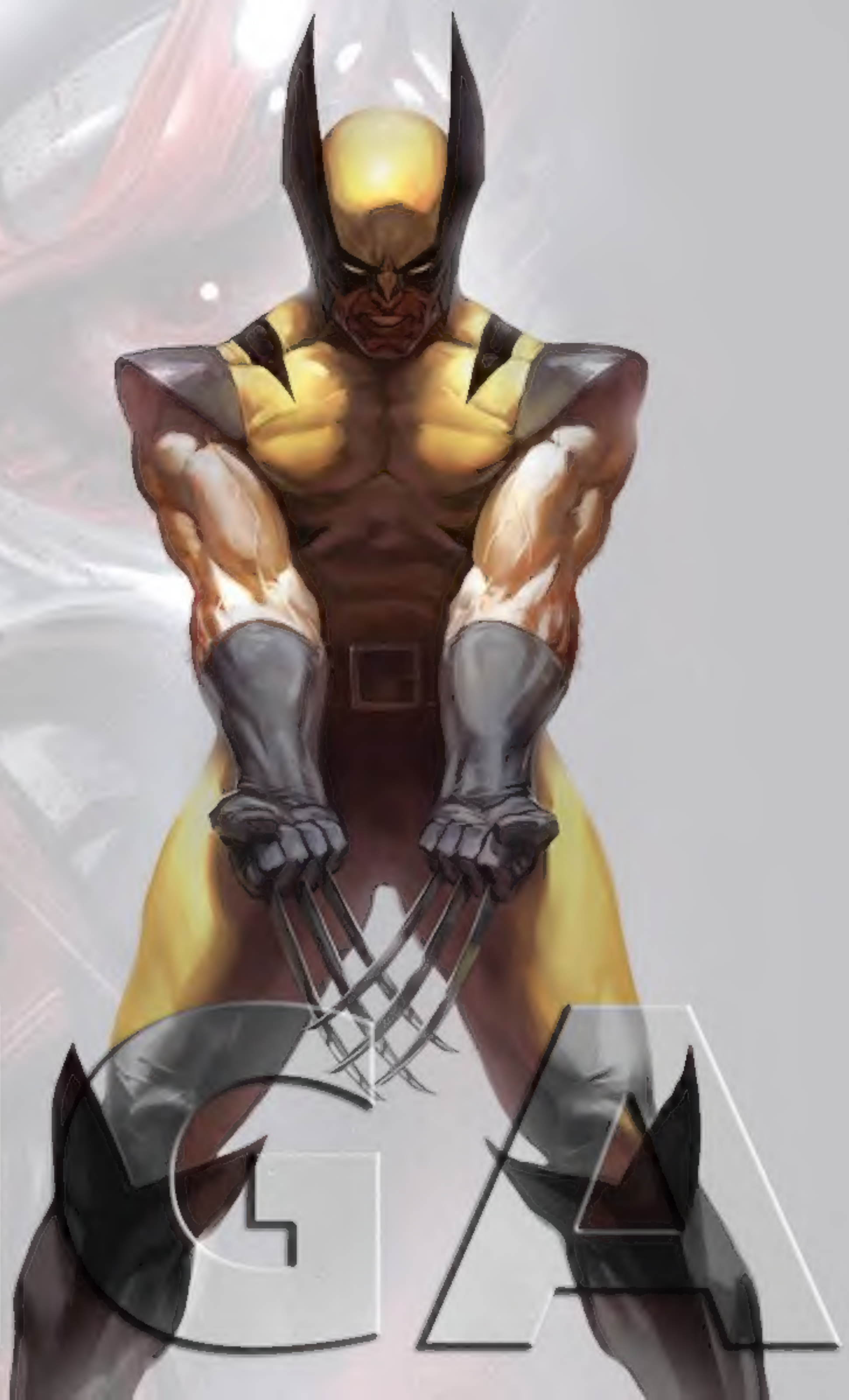
WHAT WAS DONE IS NEITHER HERE NOR THERE. THE *FUTURE* IS WHAT'S IMPORTANT.

YOU AND I HAVE *MANY THINGS* TO DISCUSS.



STARTING WITH HOW THE REST OF YOUR *IMMORTAL* LIFE IS LIKELY TO GO.





NATHAN